NEW MASSES

JANUARY 26, 1943 15c in Canada 20c

SOLVING THE FRENCH RIDDLE

BY THE EDITORS

THE TRUTH ABOUT TENNESSEE JOHNSON

Undeniable proof that MGM's film falsified history. What the little-known official archives reveal.

BY SAMUEL SILLEN

THE FILM GOEBBELS WOULD LOVE

BY JOY DAVIDMAN

WHY THE SOVIETS GAIN

BY COLONEL T.

BEHIND THE CHINESE FRONT

BY FREDERICK V. FIELD

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

IT'S not farewell we're saying to Carl Bristel, our business manager whose letter you will read on Page 8. It's so-long, and Godspeed. Carl will be leaving in the next few days for the army—after four fruitful years at his post here. Fruitful years at one of the toughest spots in the magazine—business manager of a publication that is considered a miracle "in the trade."

They were hard years, indeed; many were the tight spots and almost hopeless moments when it looked as though the next week's issue would be held up at the printer's. But it never was. Week in and week out, by one "miracle" or another, the magazine came out. The "watchdog of the treasury" saw to it that ends met; that expenditures remained within the meager budget; that every foreseeable difficulty was foreseen. And the magazine came out.

As Carl put it, the credit belongs to you —our readers. But we, his colleagues, insist that he share the laurels. He had a tough job, and he did it well. And now he will carry on—with different weapons, but it's the same fight. So long, Carl, and Godspeed.

JOSEPH NORTH.
(For the editors)

★

NEW MASSES recently participated in a symposium at the 135th Street branch of the New York Public Library of representatives of four publications which have published special issues on the role of the Negro people in the war. (Readers will recall our own special issue of October 20 which attracted so much attention.) A. B. Magil spoke for NEW MASSES; Dr. Alain Locke of Howard University for *Survey Graphic,* whose special issue he edited; Harry McAlpin, chief of the Washington Bureau of the *Chicago Defender,* for that publication; and Dr. J. P. Shalloo, assistant professor of sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, for *The Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Dr. L. D. Reddick, curator of the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature at the 135th Street library, was chairman. Each of the speakers told how his magazine prepared its special issue and what its purpose was, but they all agreed that the best speeches were made by members of the audience during the question and discussion period.

★

ANOTHER of our favorite sons, Alvah Bessie, will be missing from these pages as a regular contributor. Our drama critic, whose searching reviews and many stirring articles you have read for the past three years, will be working in the movies. You will read his goodbye on Page 31—but here, again, we know it is only so-long. We will miss his inimitable touch in the magazine, but we know millions more will share it with us, in the movies. As the old word has it, our loss will be the movies' gain. We know Hollywood will benefit by its addition of a fighting writer—a man whose works have won him the love of his colleagues and many thousands of Americans.

LETTER BOX

AT THIS point "Between Ourselves" really turns into "Readers Forum"—for pressure on our space forced us to omit the latter page and we have letters from our readers that we are eager to publish. As it is, we can only present one this week from a wide variety on hand. It is from a soldier "somewhere in England":

TO NEW MASSES: The Dean of Canterbury spoke in our town this week on the subject of Soviet Russia. Some of our guys went to hear him. The Dean is about six-two, rangy, broad-shouldered, just about the most magnificent old man you could picture, with his pink bald head and tonsure of white hair and his clerical rig entirely in black. Gaiters, apron, sharply-tailored frock coat, high collar, and pince-nez hanging on a black ribbon. He looks like what he is—a simple, wise, honest, athletic, brave, humorous man of the world. The Dean is an accusing figure from the age of reason but with an eloquent finger pointed to the future. He has a great-father aura which is not meanly clerical, but made of the veneration one must feel for a man so dauntless and wise.

His character speaks of the curiosity of Darwin, Locke, Adam Smith, Marx, Tom Paine, Jefferson. Of the humanity of Lincoln. He is not as big as they, of course, but he is of their company—almost, one feels of their time. But he is an engineer and logician before he is a professor of the Church of England. His religion is simple Christianity.

He began by citing a letter he wrote on June 27, 1941, to all the newspapers, saying that Russia would beat Hitler—at a time when almost every prominent person said Russia would be quickly beaten. "Nobody would take my scoop. The letter was printed only in America as part of my book. What, then, gave me this confidence in Russia?" On this, he spoke for almost two hours. Not a soul stirred. He spoke for forty-five minutes without mentioning "socialism" or "Communism." And then, signaling that he was about to make an important point: "I notice the reporters getting their pencils ready." Everybody looked at the press table. "They always know when a speaker is going to say something foolish. They are ready to write what I am about to say." The press looked discomfited and held their pencils foolishly. . . .

The Dean measured Russian institutions by the formula "Moral, Christian, and Scientific." He compared the creche to the nursery in the middle class English home, where he said Lenin got the idea for the creche; the five-year plan from the annual family budget. He said the Russians had no enormous gap between individual initiative and public good and gave them credit for developing the highest degree of individual initiative—like that of the 500 young men of the RAF whose enterprise saved Britain in 1940.

He was full of hope for England. A very famous fighting general had come to him to learn about Russia and penetrate those disturbing mysteries of Russian resistance. The Dean told him that socialism was "from each according to his ability—to each according to his work." The general paced the room, hitting the floor with his stick, saying slowly, "That isn't bad, that isn't wicked. . . ." The interview lasted four hours. He was invited to the general's home again and found a room full of generals, an admiral, an RAF commander. "Tell these gentlemen," said the general, "what you told me and make it simple."

"I shall make it very simple," said the Dean.

He has another book coming up in November and is now on an exhaustive every-night speaking tour, raising his own funds for sulfa drugs and mobile X-ray units for the Red Army. This, in addition to his work of running the biggest cathedral in England.

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NM SPOTLIGHT

Invade Europe!

BRITAIN'S block-buster raids on Berlin this past week were well timed: the RAF chased the Germans into the subways and shelters to cogitate at length on recent weighty events. It must be common German talk, however muted, that Hitler's armies are faring badly on the Eastern Front. Things evidently reached such a pass that Lieutenant General Dietmer, the fuehrer's leading military commentator, was stuck before a microphone to explain matters to the people. He spoke at length and with great circumlocution to admit, for the first time, what millions of Germans must already have suspected: that the going was pretty bad. He had one bright word to offer, however: he said that Germany's greatest comfort on the Russian scene was that "we can afford to bring to this front reserves from other sectors."

Millions throughout the United Nations want to rob Hitler of that comfort. "Let us strike in Europe now," was the burden of the fifth annual Williams College Current Affairs conference last week. Both President Baxter and Max Werner talked up to that effect. The same views were expressed across the sea. William J. Humphreys, writing last week from London for the Marshall Field Publications, declared that "the British press is displaying indications that it is going to demand a second front on the continent with the same intensity" it did last summer. The leading British publications are urging "a more active role for millions of American and British troops quartered in the British isles."

Much of the "restlessness," Mr. Humphreys writes, arises over the realization that the Anglo-American troops in North Africa are engaging "no more than twenty Axis divisions."

"According to this view," the London cable continues, "fifty Axis divisions must be engaged before relief probably can be brought to our overworked Russian ally." And it concludes, "The second front is said to be the only effective means of doing this."

WHATEVER else the British press wrote, this much is obvious: the thrust onto the continent should be geared to the rolling offensive of the Red Army. That drive is at crescendo now. And all military observers know that Hitler's troops are spread thin over the continent. In fact the Nazi military commentator blamed the defeats on the fact that "we had too few men at the front." And Hitler is undoubtedly nearing the bottom of his manpower basket. Explosions are brewing among all his satellite countries as casualty lists rise.

CERTAINLY, now is the time to strike; now, while Hitler's troubles are at maximum, and before his generals gain advantage of the winter months for further entrenchments. In this regard, the counsel of Herbert Hoover last week was most sinister. This angel of appeasement recommended, at the conclusion of five cunningly written articles for the American press, that the invasion of the continent be postponed another year. His line jibed precisely with that of Goebbels when he said that Hitler's continental forces "greatly exceed any land force that the United States could bring to bear in 1943." The European sea coasts, he writes, "have been enormously fortified." Let us wait, the Great Engineer says unctuously, and we can do the job better in 1944.

One may ask, will the coastlines be any the less fortified if we grant Hitler another year's respite? Hoover's arguments collapse upon even cursory examination and one can suspect—knowing his predilections—that he counsels delay of the European land front which will smash Hitler immediately, in order to gain time for the workings of negotiated peace.

Indeed, Mr. Hoover should get whatever award Adolph hands out for most valuable services rendered. Remember that Charles Lindbergh, the sage of Palo Alto's sidekick, once got a medal for telling the world that the Luftwaffe was irresistible.

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Somewhere in Germany

PERHAPS it took place in a dank cellar with eagle-eyed guards watching at the entrance; perhaps it happened in a remote farmhouse. Nobody, except those who attended, knows. Wherever it was, history was made there and all men, in all lands, should know about it. Here's what happened:

Last month in Germany representatives of all groups opposed to the Hitler regime and opposed to the fascist war of plunder held a meeting. A Catholic priest, a Reichswehr captain, representatives of the German Socialist and Communist parties, trade unionists, and members of the National Socialist Opposition group were among those who attended the underground National Peace Conference. Broadcast by a secret station to Berne, their manifesto was transmitted to this country by Inter-Continent News. We reprint below the Conference's ten-point program which forms part of the manifesto as printed in the *Worker:*

"First, the immediate end of military operations. The recall of the German army to Germany and the renunciation of conquests of foreign territory.

"Second, the overthrow of the Hitler government and the formation of a national democratic peace government.

"Third, the arrest and punishment of those responsible for the war and the confiscation of their property. The disbandment of the SS and the Gestapo.

"Fourth, the liberation of the arrested and convicted clergymen, deputies, party and trade union leaders and of those imprisoned by the Hitler government for political activities. The abolition of concentration camps and humiliating racial laws.

"Fifth, freedom of speech, the press, assembly, religion and opinion. . . .

"Sixth, the abolition of all the economic laws enforced by the Hitler government to the detriment of the people. The restoration of the freedom of peasant households and handicrafts and the freedom of trade. The security and freedom of development for small and medium enterprises. . . . The just distribution of the tax burden. . . .

"Seventh, work and just wages, the eight-hour working day and the right to rest for all workers and office employees. The restoration of the civil rights of civil servants. Aid to youth to facilitate their education and development.

"Eighth, adequate state relief and broad relief to war victims . . . by confiscating the property of those responsible for the war and of all profiteers and marauders.

"Ninth, a foreign policy of international collaboration with peoples and states. The recognition of the right of all peoples to independence and their own statehood.

"Tenth, a convention on the basis of equal and direct suffrage with the secret ballot of a new constituent national assembly to work out a democratic constitution and to create the constitutional and material guarantees of rights, law, and order."

What's Mr. Simms' Game?

WE SUGGEST that the Office of War Information investigate the propaganda that is appearing in this country under the name of William Philip Simms, foreign editor of the Scripps-Howard press. His solicitous efforts in behalf of French, Finnish, and assorted other quislings were topped off on January 13 with a column designed to show that Wang Ching-wei, the puppet who heads the Japanese-manufactured "government" at Nanking, is really a patriot under the skin. According to Simms, Wang "is playing his own foxy game with his Japanese bosses"—really working against them. And "His declaration of war against the United States and the British empire in all likelihood is meaningless." Simms presents what purports to be notes of an interview with Wang in 1934 (there are few scoundrels in Europe or Asia whom Simms hasn't at some time sympathetically interviewed). The sum and substance of these alleged notes is that Wang is ardently anti-Japanese, a pure-hearted toiler for his country, with great faith in the United States.

If there is a distinction to be made among quislings, Wang Ching-wei comes close to being the vilest of them all. For him there cannot be made even the phony excuse that is sometimes offered in behalf of Petain and Darlan, that they acted under duress and sought to salvage what they could of their nation's interests. For Wang was a member of the Chinese government at the time of the Japanese invasion, with authority second only to that of Chiang Kai-shek. A year and a half later he voluntarily chose to betray his country and become a Japanese puppet. He is loathed in China as Benedict Arnold is in our own country. What game is Simms playing?

The Senator Finagles

SENATOR VANDENBERG has chosen to kick Puerto Rico around as his first attempt in the new Congress to embarrass the administration and retard the war effort. On the opening day of the new session he introduced a bill calling for the removal of Governor Tugwell. The welfare of 1,900,000 Puerto Ricans is of little concern to the senator; it seems that the application of the Atlantic Charter should be retarded rather than advanced; our Gibraltar of the Caribbean can be left to starve—so long as our unity in the war can be disrupted.

In his attempt to show that he is unselfishly acting on behalf of the Puerto Rican people, Vandenberg cites evidence that typifies a demagogy widely employed to mislead the public about this American colony. The senator says, "among others

who have asked for his (Tugwell's) removal are the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico to the United States, the Union Republican, Socialist and Unification parties of Puerto Rico, the Chamber of Commerce, the Farmers Association, and the Free Federation of Labor of Puerto Rico."

It looks impressive, doesn't it? Vandenberg hopes Americans will think this list represents a vast majority of Puerto Rican public opinion. Well, let's examine his list.

The Resident Commissioner is Bolivar Pagan, the leader of the island's Socialist Party, which has allied itself with the most reactionary local and American interests to vote consistently against all measures of relief and reform and to slander Tugwell, Ickes, and President Roosevelt himself. It was Pagan who, according to Secretary Ickes, blocked the administration's effort to get a $15,000,000 relief appropriation through Congress last spring. The Union Republican Party is the minority political group with whom the Socialists work; it represents the imperialist die-hards.

The Unification Party, unfortunately for Senator Vandenberg's case, happens to be supporting Tugwell and his program. If the senator will examine the voting at the last special session of the island legislature or talk with the party's leaders—one of whom has recently been in this country—he will find this to be the case. We can pass over the Chamber of Commerce with the single comment that the far more representative commercial organization, the

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SOLVING THE FRENCH RIDDLE

By the Editors

DURING the past week there were unmistakable indications that in the United States, Britain, and North Africa efforts are being made to work out a solution of the North African situation. The greatest harm done by the North African muddle is that it has obscured and impeded the achievement of two central related objectives: the preparations for the launching of a European invasion and the unification of all patriotic French forces for the liberation of their country. There can be no doubt that the State Department blundered badly: first, in that it set up a regime composed exclusively of men whose affiliation to Vichy was so recent that the best that could be said of them was that their loyalty to the United Nations was still unproved; second, in that the State Department ignored and excluded from the arrangements all other anti-Axis elements of the French nation and the local Arab population; and third, in that it operated entirely on its own and failed to work out a prior agreement with Britain, Russia, and other members of the United Nations.

The statement of Brendan Bracken, British Minister of Information, denying any rift with the United States over North Africa, the efforts being made to bring together General de Gaulle and General Giraud, and the report that the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union, and China may soon set up a joint council to handle the problems of the war are hopeful signs. And of far-reaching significance has been the formal adherence of the French Communist Party to the de Gaulle National Committee in London. This has been accompanied by the press interview given in the de Gaulle headquarters by Ferdinand Grenier, member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party, who is newly arrived from France, and a lengthy article in the New York *Daily Worker* by one of the most authoritative of French Communist leaders, Andre Marty. This article, published in the *Daily Worker* of January 19, 20, and 21, is one of the most remarkable documents that has come out of the war. Its views on French unity and on the tactics of the anti-Hitler struggle are so comprehensive that they illuminate the problems not only of France and Europe, but of all nations fighting against Hitlerism.

THE basic approach of Marty and Grenier is that in France today all political distinctions are being thrust aside save one: for Hitler and his Vichy puppets or against them. The national front that is now being forged extends from sincere conservatives who until recently "still had faith in Vichy," among whom Marty includes General Giraud, to the Communists. "There is a barrier now," he writes, "not between 'rights' and 'lefts,' but between those who wish to fight for the independence of France, and those who betray and sell out to the enemy. . . ." Marty holds up as a symbol and model the unity achieved between officers and men in the heroic scuttling of a large part of the French fleet at Toulon—the high officers were for the most part Vichy adherents up to the eleventh hour. "It's a question of reaching on a national scale," he writes, "the same unity and state of organization which in Toulon wrested the French navy from the hands of the enemy." It is as a step toward achieving this broad unification of the French nation that the Communist Party has joined the de Gaulle Fighting France movement. A statement issued by the de Gaulle committee after the Grenier interview indicates that its conception of the inclusiveness of French unity agrees substantially with that of the Communists.

Unity is the foundation for the second task that Marty outlines: *organization of resistance and preparation of the general uprising of the French nation for its own liberation.* A general uprising should be timed to coincide with the opening of a second front by the Allies, he points out. And Marxist that he is, Marty knows that it cannot be a sudden spontaneous outbreak, but must be the culmination of systematic, unremitting efforts to make life intolerable for the invader and to recapture or destroy all he has seized.

GRENIER in his interview told of the remarkable activity carried on by the Communist Party in cooperation with various other groups. Six million copies of newspapers and pamphlets were issued by the Party in 1942, of which "not more than ten percent were lost, destroyed, or otherwise failed to find at least one reader." Ten thousand Communists have been shot or tortured to death. "Sabotage is so widespread that in a single week at the Dijon rail junction no less than sixty locomotives were recently destroyed." And both Grenier and Marty give accounts of what has hitherto not been reported in the American press —the developing French guerrilla movement.

Marty points out that "in this great liberation struggle North Africa can and must play a tremendous role. It must become the base for mustering the armed forces, for concentrating war materials and all that is necessary for the opening of the second front in Europe." To make possible the fullfilment of this role Marty proposes in the name of the Communist Party of France: "the immediate liberation of the 30,000 patriots—French, Arab, Spanish, and other anti-fascists —interned in concentration camps on the orders of the Italian-German 'Armistice Commission' "; restoration of all prewar democratic and republican liberties; the removal from their posts of all fifth column agents, the disbandment of all Hitler groups and the arrest of their leaders; equal rights for the 15,000,000 Arabs and Berbers.

The program and perspective that Andre Marty presents is one that should quicken the blood of every American. Here is the indestructible spirit of the Great French Revolution which Jefferson loved, which Tom Paine fought for, which has always stirred and renewed democracy in our country.

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Jim Turnbull

News Item: FEPC hearings on job discrimination in railroad industry canceled.

Merchants' Association, has come out strongly for Tugwell.

Finally, as to the farm and labor groups he cites: the Farmers Association not only fails to represent Puerto Rican farmers, but its ranks include only a minority of the big landowners. And the Free Federation of Labor became so discredited through its deals with the sugar interests that several years ago its failures gave rise to the real trade union movement, the Confederation of Puerto Rican Workers.

Obviously Mr. Vandenberg is not speaking for a majority, or even an important segment, of Puerto Ricans. They speak for themselves—and their interests are directly opposed to those of the senator from Michigan.

Gunning for FEPC

"THE fight on discrimination is the main front of the home fight against fascism." This sentence appeared in NEW MASSES two weeks ago as part of a statement by John Beecher, New York Regional Representative of the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice. And this sentence was the key idea of President Roosevelt's Executive Order 8802, setting up the FEPC.

But pressure of various employer groups, poll-taxers, and defeatists is endangering this major front. Succumbing to this pressure, Manpower Commissioner Paul V. McNutt canceled the FEPC hearing on job discrimination in the railroad industry which was scheduled for Jan. 25. This move was described last week by Max Yergan, president of the National Negro Congress and a contributing editor of this magazine, as "a serious capitulation to Governor Dixon of Alabama, to the white supremacists, and to other reactionary forces who have seen the FEPC not only as a threat to the citadel of Jim-Crowism but also as a major contribution to the unity of the Negro people with their fellow Americans in the national front for victory over fascist enslavement."

The same firm position has been taken by the CIO, the Negro Labor Victory Committee, and several other win-the-war groups. Henry Epstein, former attorney general of New York, resigned as lawyer for the FEPC when he learned that the hearings were to be canceled.

It is imperative that these hearings be held by the FEPC, particularly in Detroit and in the Southwest. The FEPC must be restored as an autonomous committee within the executive offices of the President. On the whole domestic front, there is no issue that calls for more determined work by united front committees to mobilize public opinion in support of the FEPC and the administration's declared anti-discrimination policy.

Aid to Adolph

IN AMERICA and elsewhere progressive forces have consistently pointed out the danger of falling into the Hitler trap of creating disunity by continuing to discriminate against members of the Communist Party and other anti-fascist fighters. Recently this issue was vigorously raised in connection with the situation in North Africa where tens of thousands of Spanish loyalists and International Brigaders remain in concentration camps despite President Roosevelt's request for their immediate liberation. The same issue has been repeatedly raised with respect to China where powerful, reactionary groups in the Kuomintang have succeeded in continuing official opposition to the Communists, to the world-famous Eighth Route and Fourth Armies, and to the guerrillas and the partisans. We speak of it again in the article on China which appears on page 21 of this issue.

IN HIS notable address at the recent Lenin Memorial Meeting in Madison Square Garden, Earl Browder publicly charged the US War Department with practicing the same discrimination in this country. "Our War Department," Mr. Browder said, "has issued instructions to the officers in charge of training camps to segregate and remove from combat training 'all known Nazis, fascists, and Communists.' Pursuant to this order, hundreds of Communists had been isolated in labor camps together with German and Italian enemy aliens of pronounced Nazi views. Veterans of the International Brigade are included as Communists, regardless of their party affiliations. Many more hundreds of Communists have been removed from combat units in which they had been trained, and given non-combat assignments at home."

As a further example Mr. Browder cited a memorandum by Colonel Strong,

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supervisor of war production in the Detroit area. This memorandum, which was circulated among employers last July, read, "There are many Communists in the plants and they cannot be trusted since their attitude is likely to be guided by whether Russia remains in the war on the side of the United States or not." Efforts to clear up this situation quietly have not succeeded. Indeed only recently, according to Mr. Browder, Colonel Strong has "presented long lists of presumed Communists employed in war industries in Detroit, with the demand on the employers that these men shall be discharged from such employment."

We have here examples of the most basic confusion among high government circles regarding the nature of the war and the necessities of unity for victory. It is a situation that must be corrected at once if our maximum effort is to be released for the single objective of all genuine Americans. Capt. Herman Boettcher and Sergt. Bob Thompson have demonstrated to the world the loyalty and heroism of International Brigaders. But hundreds of thousands of their comrades here and throughout the world are being prevented from throwing their strength against the enemy.

Excessive Excess

THE profit figures of a number of leading corporations, as revealed the other day by the Office of Price Administration, put ideas into our head. For the first nine months of 1942 net profits of General Motors after deductions for taxes, salaries of executives, bonuses, depreciation, etc., were $146,074,000, or six percent above GM's average annual profit from 1936 to 1939. Bethlehem Steel boosted its net in the first nine months of 1942 thirty-six percent over the average peacetime year. Martin Aircraft's profit zoomed 336 percent and United Aircraft 169 percent over the peacetime average. An earlier report of the Department of Commerce and the OPA estimated that industrial profits in 1942 after all deductions would run about sixty percent higher than in 1939, which wasn't a bad year at all.

Then turn to President Roosevelt's budget message and—do you get the connection? The President asked for $16,000,000,000 in additional taxes or savings or both. He said: "I cannot ask the Congress to impose the necessarily heavy financial burden on the lower and middle incomes unless the taxes on higher and very large incomes are made fully effective." The President was speaking of large individual incomes, but undoubtedly he also had in mind the oversize profits of corporations. Perhaps he was too polite to mention the request he made last April 27, when he sent his seven-point economic stabilization program to Congress: "Under the proposed new tax law we seek to take by taxation *all* undue or excess profits." This request was honored in the breach by the tax law Congress actually passed last September. That's why, in thinking of our country's need for sixteen billions in additional revenue, those profit figures put ideas into our head.

WHAT about the Ruml plan? If one were to judge by the headlines and the pronouncements of certain congressmen, the big tax problem before Congress is not the raising of sixteen billions in additional revenue, but the so-called Ruml pay-as-you-go plan. This proposal would skip taxes on 1942 income and have 1943 payments apply to 1943 income. Putting income taxes on a pay-as-you-go basis is a good idea and is not original with the Ruml plan. The unusual campaign that has been drummed up for this scheme in reactionary circles seems, however, to be based on its proposal that the government just forget about last year's income taxes. That this intrigues the wealthy is obvious; but just how increasing the 1942 deficit by $7,600,000,000—the amount that would be skipped—will help win the war, is a mystery. The fact that one of the chief sponsors of the Ruml plan is the well known defeatist, Senator Clark of Missouri, and that he combines this with a proposal to double the present soak-the-poor five percent "victory" tax doesn't help allay suspicions.

Salute to the Sullivans

FIVE Sullivans: George, Francis, Joseph, Madison, and Albert. The oldest was twenty-nine, the youngest twenty. They hailed from Waterloo, Iowa. Just a year ago they enlisted in the Navy, on the condition that they would all be kept together. They sailed out on the cruiser *Juneau*.

The *Juneau* was sunk in the Pacific, and there was only a slender thread of hope for the brave parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas F. Sullivan. And now that thread has been snapped. A buddy of the Sullivans, a boy from Nebraska, has told how these brothers went down in action, fighting gloriously for their country, going down with their ship. It is a heartbreaking story. It is an heroic story. This is the greatest loss suffered by a single family in American military history.

The spirit of the Sullivans should prod every one of us to double and triple our efforts for the cause in which they died. And to the Sullivan parents in Iowa: our deepest sympathy, the gratitude of a revenging nation that will demolish the enemy and enshrine these five boys in undying memory.

Kill the Poll Tax

BILBO, "the Man," is back in the Senate, a little hoarse from his triumphant and obscene filibuster that helped kill repeal of the poll tax in the last session. He is something of a hero to every anti-Semitic, Negro-hating anti-democrat. But Bilbo didn't kill the movement to abolish the poll tax; he merely postponed passage of the bill. Already, Representatives Marcantonio, Gavagan, and Baldwin of New York, Bender of Ohio, and Magnussen of Washington have introduced measures calling for repeal.

It should be noted that Stephen Day of Illinois, notorious defeatist, also offered a bill to get rid of the poll tax. But Day's horning in represents something other than a genuine devotion to the people's needs. For Day is a Chicago *Tribune* man whose record matches that of the worst appeasers in Congress. He is interested at the moment in using the poll tax issue as an excuse to belabor the administration and to disrupt the war effort. Day claims the support of an outfit existing only on paper, the National Negro Council, and boasting the membership of one Edgar Brown, who writes paid articles for Col. Robert McCormick. But for all this "mass support"—even with John L. Lewis tagging along—Day will find that he cannot, as he hopes, take over the anti-poll tax movement before running it into the ground, or use it for political profit.

The National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax has begun immediate mobilization of its forces for a "fight from hell to breakfast," as they put it up at committee headquarters. Negro organizations have launched powerful campaigns. Organized labor vigorously presses for poll tax repeal, as Philip Murray emphasized at the CIO legislative meeting last week. Democrats and Republicans alike can challenge reaction at its very source, and around the poll tax fight forge the unity needed to smash the defeatists. There can be no greater guarantee that this Congress will be forced to act—and favorably. As Representative Marcantonio adds, the Senate will get its chance well before the end of the term so that any Bilbo filibuster will have to last a mighty long time.

It is worth adding that Representative

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OFF TO THE FRONT

January 19.

Dear Reader:

Last night I reported for my draft board physical; today I'm happy to tell you that in a few days I shall be one of the seven million, that great American military organization that has joined the armies of the United Nations to crush the beast of Hitlerism forever.

Today is my fondest anniversary, the end of four splendid years with New Masses, the happiest years of my life. The comradeship of twenty-two warm human beings who make up our staff, the solidarity through the varied hardships in the life of our magazine, the patient, confident and collective grappling with seemingly insoluble problems, the love for NM verified over and over again by the actors, writers, artists, teachers, lawyers, and public figures in their participation in the life of the magazine—these are memories I will carry forever.

But my most lasting impression is the spirit of our readers, the heroic and unconquerable resolution that NM must go on at all costs, that "damn the difficulties" attitude which through miracles of self-sacrifice wiped out the pillboxes of reaction and accumulated bills that were our constant menace. How vividly I recall instance after instance when NM seemed to be gasping its last breath, when enemies were congratulating themselves on our certain demise, when even we at the helm were desperate at the odds. But there was always the miracle—as in a Hollywood movie—when we opened our mail and found a check for $500 from a progressive foundation, or when a few writers from the West Coast pooled their resources and sent it in, or when a group of readers in St. Louis rushed funds they had raised the night before at a party.

I am going to the war that we all passionately believe in and I feel that I am carrying NM and the people who create it each week, along with me. The staff and the readers. The fight is the same. Only the locale has changed.

And yet, it is at times when you prepare to leave that you can get a more objective view of your job, the work you lived with every waking hour, the thirty-two pages you read in galleys each week, this magazine you loved more dearly than anything else in the world. And you begin to worry. Will the bills be paid, will salaries be paid, will our circulation continue to rise, will our influence for progress in American life grow in power and effectiveness?

And then you chide yourself—you ought to have learned these four tough years that NM is self-sufficient, that it is much bigger and more important than any individual working for it. As long as you keep faith with the people, as long as you have your readers, nothing can blunt this weapon, nothing can stunt its progress. NM's readers will never fail the magazine. Thirty-two years of publication stand as eloquent witness to this truth.

So I turn over my duties to Herb Goldfrank. I leave NM for the duration, calm in the knowledge that our friends will produce new and greater miracles, confident in our magazine's future.

I want to close this letter to you with my deepest appreciation for what you have all given me, you readers, you friends who were so sympathetic and generous along the routes of my tours for you support, you editors, and office workers who taught me what comradeship, solidarity mean.

I want to say farewell until victory is won and we can meet again in a happier world.

Carl A. Bristel

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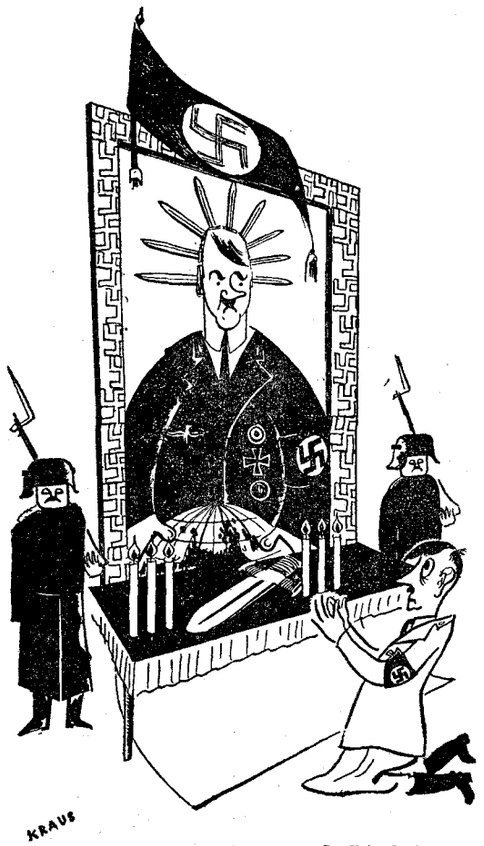
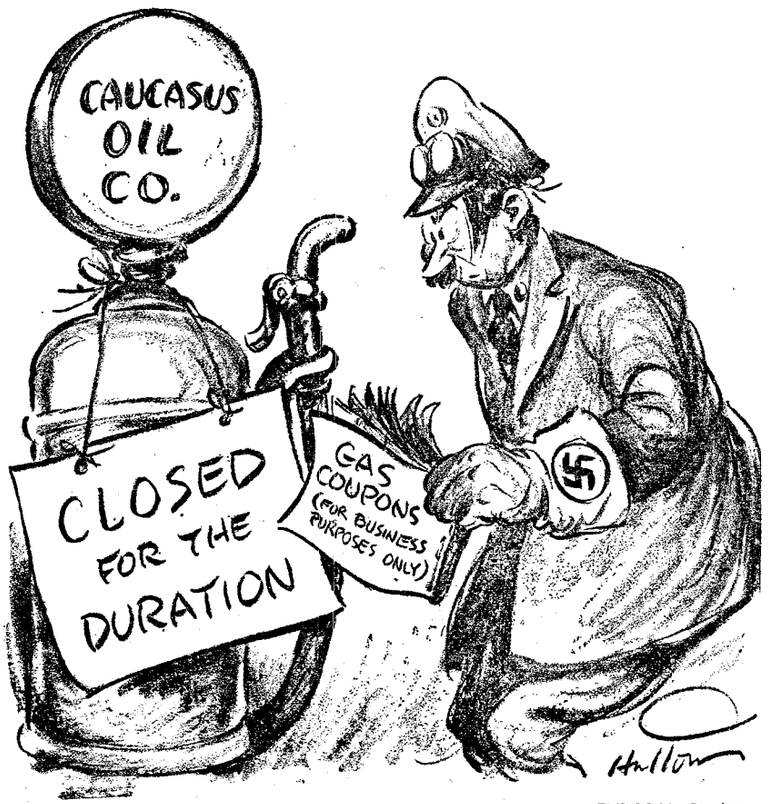


La Voix de France

"Great Adolph of 1940, come to my aid."



Philadelphia *Inquirer*

How are you fixed for shoe leather?

(Continued from page 7)

Guyer of Kansas and Gavagan of New York have entered bills designed to end lynchings. A victory outlawing the poll tax will greatly advance the chances of passing anti-lynch legislation as well in the coming year.

The Hard Coal Issue

As we go to press, word comes from the anthracite country that the large South Wilkes Barre local has voted to return to work. This is of extreme significance, for it was that local which started the strike wave there. Observers believe the peak of the strike wave has been reached, and that other locals will quickly follow the Wilkes Barre miners back to the pits. Already more than 8,000 have returned.

All friends of labor, and the most active proponents of all-out for victory, will welcome the cessation of the strikes. It is generally recognized that the miners had legitimate grievances, plenty of them, but that they took the wrong way of trying to improve matters. The essential loyalty of the miners to the war against Hitlerism was never under question: their action in striking was. After all, the biggest gain labor here and throughout the world can make is the total destruction of Hitlerism. That takes precedence over everything. And strikes help Hitler—that much is incontrovertible.

The reason for the strike grew out of real grievances: John L. Lewis' diktat for an increase in union dues, decided upon without local representation, is a very serious matter. Particularly when their wages have not risen since the war, while living expenses have mounted steadily.

Delegates to the tri-district board sessions in Hazleton have decided against a general strike, and have voted to cease functioning as a rank and file group in order to pull the pins from under John L. Lewis who is brandishing the ax, threatening all kind of expulsions and recriminations. On the other hand, they decided to form a Victory Committee to gear the work of the union with the war. The War Labor Board should take the miners' grievances into full consideration—the coal diggers find it hard to make ends meet, hard to keep themselves fit for the crucial task of providing our war machine with vitally necessary hard coal. Their living conditions are, in reality, a very serious war issue.

The other principal grievance—the matter of increased dues—is one that can only be settled by the miners themselves. Strengthened representation in the union machinery will settle that problem; a successful demand for a referendum now, as their constitution provides, can settle matters.

The enemies of labor welcomed the strike; they saw in it the basis for whipping up national resentment against the miners and against labor generally. Return to work, and using the methods cited above, will rob the labor-haters and John L. Lewis of the bludgeons the strike action afforded them.

Tune In!

Every Sunday at 12:45 PM

on

WQXR

NM Clears the Air

"Words Are Bullets"

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19 Years in the Fight

BIRTHDAY greetings to the *Daily Worker,* fighting organ of the working class which splendidly exemplifies its masthead slogan: "National Unity for Victory over Nazism-Fascism." After nineteen years of untiring devotion to truth and freedom the *Daily Worker* has more than earned its prominent position in American journalism. Its services in this war have been incalculable. It has taken the lead in the fight against the enemy abroad and the defeatists at home. By telling the American people the truth about the Soviet Union, ever since that early issue in which it announced the untimely death of Lenin, this paper has helped bring about American-Soviet understanding and friendship. It supports and strengthens the United Nations coalition for victory. It is the most consistent champion of the Negro people, the labor movement, the colonial and semi-colonial peoples everywhere.

In the past week or two the *Daily Worker* has given additional evidence of an enterprising news sense which again and again enables it to scoop other papers. It published the full text of a manifesto issued by an underground National Peace Conference in Germany. It carried the complete details of an interview with the French Communist leader, Grenier, now in London with the de Gaulle Free French movement. And it published three articles by Andre Marty on the position of France.

These are only three scattered examples of indispensable material that is to be found nowhere else in this country's press. We wish the *Daily Worker* all success in the circulation campaign that it has just undertaken. Its brilliant contribution to the war effort entitles it to the widest support of the American reading public.

L'Affaire Flynn

L'AFFAIRE Flynn is a diversionary operation. It is a little rumpus designed to kick up big dust and prevent the administration and the country from moving ahead with the real problems of the war. We do not doubt that President Roosevelt could have chosen a far more qualified man for the post of Minister to Australia than the outgoing chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Flynn is, in fact, a mediocre machine politician, and our country needs superior talent in its foreign service. But it is certain that if the President had chosen, say, Jim Farley, for the job, the same quarters that are now howling about Flynn would have given fulsome praise. The difference being that Flynn supported the President in the last election and Farley knifed him. Nor did those who are trying to link Flynn with Japanese interests have any trouble swallowing the pro-fascist appeaser and bosom pal of Petain, William C. Bullitt, now cavorting somewhere in North Africa or the Middle East. There is no need to defend Flynn or the President's choice of him as Minister to Australia. But there *is* need to expose those who are using the inflated Flynn issue to smear the President and obstruct the war effort.

"Delinquency" Test

MAYOR LAGUARDIA has now declared, in his annual Municipal Finance message to the City Council, that he sees no need to expend money for the special care of children in wartime. LaGuardia's argument is based entirely on the fact that out of 950,000 children of court age in New York, only 4,513 were brought into court in 1942, about 500 more than last year. A breakdown of the cases shows no special age or sex growing more delinquent, or any special part of the city where delinquency is rising sharply. Therefore, says the mayor, let's drop the problem.

This should be a lesson to groups interested in child care—that they should not tie their demands too closely to the delinquency rate. The mayor of any city could easily lower the delinquency rate by the simple expedient of telling the police not to pick up so many kids. That would raise the rate of delinquency among mayors—but it could also make great difficulties in getting action on child care programs, the demand for which was based primarily on juvenile delinquency rates.

The mayor of New York has chosen to ignore entirely the relationship of child care to war production which necessitates a nursery school and after-school program; he appears totally uninterested in what type of citizens are coming along to carry on the affairs of our country. Let's make sure other mayors don't have a chance to follow their leader.

The Tresca Murder

IT IS to be hoped that the murderer or murderers of Carlo Tresca will be swiftly apprehended and properly punished. No clear motive has been established for the killing of Tresca, but it is plain that, whatever the motive, those responsible for the murder are enemies of democratic institutions and the labor movement. For the weapon of assassination serves only these enemies.

All the more vicious, therefore, is the attempt of some newspapers to link Communists with the slaying of Tresca through the ancient device of "anonymous sources" and "it is alleged." This attempted link smacks of Hitler's claim that the Communists burned the Reichstag. It is founded on nothing but the desire of reactionary elements to smear the Communists at the expense of national unity. The effect of dragging in these insinuations is to refute the charge that fascists killed Tresca.

Robert Minor, assistant general secretary of the Communist Party, exposed this shady technique in a hard-hitting statement last week. The editors of the New York *Times* and *Herald Tribune* know, says Minor, that "any person holding views even remotely tolerant of individual acts of terror would be expelled from the Party forthwith, as is made mandatory by the Constitution of the Party. . . . The achievements of social progress are accomplished only by democratic movements of the masses of people—never by terroristic acts of individuals. Such terroristic acts are invariably the acts of persons or groups who have lost faith in the masses. Communists never lose faith in the masses; therefore never commit such deeds. And the masses are never won by such deeds, but turn with healthy instinct against them."

Press Parade

HITLER, worried about the progress of the war, suggested to Mussolini that it wouldn't be a bad idea if Il Duce overran some country or other to keep the Axis prestige from dropping any further.

"Why not Switzerland?" broached der fuehrer. "How about trying the St. Gotthard Pass? You could easily go through that."

"Oh, no," protested Mussolini. "That place is all mined and very well guarded."

"Well," answered Hitler impatiently, "then go through the St. Bernard Pass."

"But, mein fuehrer," pleaded Mussolini. "Those big dogs!"

"RUSSIA is very badly hurt; is unlikely to be able to push Hitler backward."

United States News, Oct. 30, 1942

"IN RUSSIA Hitler's armies are very badly hurt. *And* they are having to be thinned for service elsewhere. Russia proved Hitler's great mistake."

United States News, Nov. 27, 1942

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No Oracular Insight?

"THIS year, the Russian offensive was feeble. It needs no oracular insight to see that it will be feebler still next year. Indeed, if the German calculations are correct, the Red Army will be so weak that it can be fended off by a holding force while the heaviest German forces are directed to the West against the second front."

"Fortune" Magazine, December 1942.

For the Duration?

NEW COURSES and Changes in Courses for the Winter Quarter.

155w—Metaphysics has been canceled.

—*Daily Bulletin*, University of Minn.

FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

WHY THE SOVIETS GAIN

Editorial note: Since Colonel T. wrote the article below, a special Moscow communique reveals one of the great moments in the war: the siege of Leningrad has been lifted. The Red Army has recaptured Schluesselburg, key to the city of 3,000,000. Simultaneous with this announcement comes the good news that Kamensk, big German base 85 miles north of Rostov on the Voronezh railway, has been taken by the Russians. Colonel T., who likened the current Red Army offensive to a "symphony in five movements," just telephoned to say that the opus has a sixth movement —the drive in the Leningrad area.

TO THOSE squeamish souls who might object to my applying the word "symphony" to armed conflict I wish to point out that Webster's eighteen-pound dictionary gives the following (second choice) definition of the word: *"consonance or harmony of any kind."* And while symphonies usually have four movements, I do not hesitate to apply the word to the current Soviet offensive, which consists of five distinct movements. This offensive is a real military "symphony," so well timed and coordinated are its movements, so timely the entries of the various "instruments," so well knit is the entire texture of the "themes," so mathematically precise is the logistical "harmony" of the whole thing.

TWO months have passed since the representative of the Soviet High Command, Army General Gregory Zhukov, lifted his baton and struck the opening chord at Stalingrad.

The "First Movement" of the symphony thundered on.

Two Soviet Army groups dug into the troop-saturated nipple of the enormous German bulge before Stalingrad and six days after the start of the operation had pinched off twenty-two enemy divisions, immobilizing them within a sector of a circle fifty miles in diameter.

Then "Movement Two" began hundreds of miles away on the frozen Kalinin Front. The Red Army struck at Rzhev and at Velikie Luki, creating a threat to the German strong point of Rzhev and to the main railroad running to Leningrad.

Before Stalingrad the enemy countered with a heavy push of seven infantry and three panzer divisions from Kotelnikov, striving to break the ring around the twenty-two divisions bottled up between the Volga and the Don. The Red Army gave way, retreating slowly and letting the new German wedge sink in.

The moment that wedge was stuck good and hard, the "Third Movement" was unleashed in the Middle Don and the armies of Generals Golikov and Rokossovski spread southward to cut the German-held Voronezh-Rostov and Stalingrad-Likhaya railroads. As the German reserves sped to reenforce the defenders of the Middle Don Front and the key railroad junction of Millerovo, and it became clear that General Mannstein on the Stalingrad-Kotelnikov line could get no more reenforcements for his relief thrust southwest of the Volga city, General Yeremenko struck at him and rolled him back, routed to Kotelnikov and far beyond that point, to the Manych. Simultaneously Soviet cavalry and light mechanized forces began clearing the great Kalmyk steppe of the enemy, shaking loose the northern flank and protection of the German armies in the fastnesses of the North Caucasus.

WHILE this was under way, the Red Armies of the Caucasus struck a preliminary blow at the Germans in the Nalchik area and a few days later followed it up with the big blow at Mozdok, fanning out gradually to the North to make contact with the Red Armies sweeping south through the Kalmyk steppe. That was the "Fourth Movement." Meanwhile, General Rokossovsky was creating the most dangerous threat to Rostov by sliding down the Lower Don and along the Stalingrad-Likhaya railroad, after closing a second, outer ring around the trapped German Sixth Army before Stalingrad.

Faced with four major Soviet offensives, the enemy, with his tactical reserves "soldered" to the various threatened sectors, was deprived of the possibility of maneuvering. This loss was clearly reflected in the total absence of any real strategic counter-action by the Germans—those past masters of maneuver. All they produced was a frontal defense of the Millerovo Front, a hasty, sometimes panicky, never planned retreat along the main Caucasian railroad, and that primitively conceived counter-blow (also frontal) by von Mannstein's army at Kotelnikov. Not even at Velikie Luki—which they lost on January 1, admitting it only on January 15, thus risking the undermining of even Hanson Baldwin's confidence in their truthfulness—not even there did the Germans offer a real counter-manuever, although they had the means as far as communications were concerned and the Soviet sharp wedge

Warning to Nazis

General, your tank is a strong machine.
It can break down a wood, crush a hundred men.

General, your plane is a strong machine.
It flies faster than storm, carries more than an elephant.
But it has one drawback;
It needs a flyer.

General, man is a useful machine.
He can fly and he can kill.
But he has one drawback;
He can think.

BERTOLT BRECHT.

Mr. Brecht's poem, translated by Joy Davidman, is from the forthcoming anthology, "War Poems of the United Nations," to be published this spring by Dial Press, and edited by Miss Davidman.

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offered opportunities for a pincer operation.

The German High Command was obviously bewildered by the quick succession of mighty blows showered upon their heads. They were not prepared for the power, speed and coordination—truly symphonic coordination—of the Soviet gigantic "rolling attack." With German strategic reserves in suspense because of the uncertainty created by the multiple Soviet offensives; with their tactical reserves pinned down hard at Velikie Luki, on the Middle Don, in the Caucasus, and their twenty-two divisions encircled at Stalingrad, the Germans could think only of one thing: to muster every ounce of strength for the defense of Rostov. For the Soviets to capture Rostov would create a truly disastrous situation for the entire German Southern Front—even for the German Home Front.

The Germans had important advantages here. They had the use of the densest railroad network in the entire Soviet Union, that of the Donbas, while the Red Armies of Vatutin, Golikov, Rokossovski, and Yeremenko had no working railroads at all. Rossosh and Millerovo were in German hands and von Hoth's divisions sat astride the two railroads running out of Stalingrad to Likhaya and to Tikhoretsk. Only General Maslennikov, in the Caucasus, had a railroad line he could use.

A week-long pause on the Middle Don ensued. There developed a heavy slugging, frontal match. This is where the Soviet Command presented its ultimatum to the entrapped Germans before Stalingrad. (It should be said, in passing, that these Germans were performing a great service to their cause by sitting there, suicidal as their stubbornness might seem. For they were denying their opponents the use of two vital railroads, from Stalingrad to Likhaya and Tikhoretsk; and they were, in their turn, pinning down at least ten or twelve Soviet divisions, thus preventing them from taking part in the push on Rostov.) The Germans turned down the ultimatum on January 9 and the general assault against their positions started on January 10 and is still going on at this writing. It is the finale of the "First Movement" and it merges with "Movement Five," which thundered in on December 12 south of Voronezh with the opening of the railroad from Voronezh down to Millerovo as one of its objectives. In quick succession Millerovo and Rossosh fell. The line from Voronezh down to Glubokaya is now entirely in Soviet hands and should be functioning in about a week.

We realize that this account must be bewildering to the lay reader. So was the subject of the account to the German High Command. A brilliant "strategic symphony": considering the power of the adversary, it may be said that no precedent for it can be found in military history.

WATCH ON THE POTOMAC by BRUCE MINTON

CAPITOL HEADMEN

Washington.

THE blustering anti-Willkie hatchetmen among the Republicans have come to Washington with one aim —to make mincemeat out of the New Deal. Thereby, they believe they will ease the way toward a 1944 victory for that GOP faction which takes its inspiration from the National Association of Manufacturers. This greedy bunch depends in no small degree on the support offered by the equally cynical and defeatist southern poll taxers among the Democrats, without whom the Republican reactionaries would be pretty well isolated and lacking in decisive power. That the present plots and maneuvers in Congress can dangerously impede the war effort and delay victory just doesn't seem to cut any ice so far as these schemers go. In a very true sense, they know only politics-as-usual, and the war is relegated to second place.

IT IS too soon to know what tactic the administration will finally adopt. Congress has been in session for less than a week. So far, most of the time has been devoted to organization and to receiving the two presidential messages. On the very first day Dies and Cox sounded off with what is now their familiar head-hunting song, and no two men better express the "minds" of the defeatists on either side of the aisle. Yet, except for this initial blast, the poll taxers—being old-timers—have holed up in their offices, not bothering to appear on the floor of Congress. It is quite a sight these days to visit the House and find the Republican benches filled, while the Democratic half is graced by only a handful of legislators. The Republicans seemingly are breaking in their numerous fledglings, giving them a chance to get the feel of things.

True, by no means all Republicans—any more than all Democrats—believe their congressional duties limit them to slurring the President. But lest newcomers are too tempted to get busy with needed legislation, Ham Fish is on hand to attack fuel rationing, and Gifford of Massachusetts treats the House to his Harvard-accented denunciations of Vice-President Wallace and lend lease (with such fillips as "Any President can get us into war or other trouble by his diplomatic action at almost any time"). The harpies gather to scoff shrilly, and to befoul our allies by denouncing lend-lease. Knutson of Minnesota describes "the table with plates" where every nation can help itself to American bounty —"not you, but they," he screams. "Of course," Knutson goes on, "if we are going to do all these things for all these people, what will be left for us Americans?" Edwin Hall of New York embellishes this idea: "I want to press the hope that the people of America continue to eat during 1943." Hoffman of Michigan attacks NEW MASSES, *New Republic, Daily Worker, PM,* and the Union for Democratic Action; Mason of Illinois lauds the Dies committee on which he serves, receiving the expected support from Ham Fish; Rankin—the lone poll taxer to take the floor—offers his usual scurrility before dashing over to the Senate to encourage his brethren there; and all in all, a good time is had by the worst defeatists and obstructionists.

ASIDE from Rankin, the poll taxers are not participating for the moment—which does not mean they are idle. Their pressure caused the War Manpower Commission abruptly to cancel hearings to bring out the facts on discrimination against Negroes in the railroad industry; calling off the investigation seriously lessens the effectiveness of the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice. The poll taxers, these days, are doers, inclined to work behind the scene.

For the moment liberal-minded men in Washington are openly alarmed, primarily because they have not heard the voice of the people, of the country at large. The progressives long for pressure: they hope ardently for a fight to start in the towns and villages all over the land to stop just what is happening in Congress now.

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In consequence, the words of Philip Murray at the recent CIO legislative conference take on added meaning, even historical importance. The press did not sufficiently indicate the significance of Murray's remarks to the CIO working staff last week. President Roosevelt, Murray assured his listeners, wants pressure. There is still far too much illusion prevalent that some "inside deal," some machination behind closed doors will succeed in destroying the appeaser-defeatist coalition. But nothing matters in politics so much as the organization of the people. Therefore, Mr. Murray insisted—more strongly than any spokesman of a great labor body has ever before insisted—there is vital need for widespread political and legislative activity to promote and advance the war. Nor did he mean, he went on, political activity restricted to the top reaches of the labor movement, or to letter and wire campaigns or to lobbying in Washington. Much more important was to bring political issues directly to the rank and file, to build political fires in the communities, to promote unity of action on a local scale with the CIO taking leadership in cementing unity between its members and those of the AFL, the Railroad Brotherhoods, and various citizens' groups.

EVEN during the last elections the labor movement relied too heavily on pronouncements by executive boards, failing to acquaint the rank and file with the urgent necessity to advance the war effort by involving every possible person and organization in the political life of the communities. Now Mr. Murray pushes realistic organization—and when labor decides to go after organization, it knows how to get it. Moreover, Mr. Murray was not content merely to state the need. He went much farther, offering precise goals. Without any ifs or buts, he called specific attention to the menace of the Dies committee. He reiterated the CIO's unconditional support of the Tolan committee, and its approval of the aims of the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill for an Office of War Mobilization. He vigorously opposed national service legislation. He called for intense struggle to win over-all rationing, effective price-control, social security laws. He considered the passage of an anti-poll tax bill and the ending of discriminatory practices imperative to national morale. He insisted on the preservation of the War Labor **Board for employer attacks**, while urging that the Board be streamlined. And he kept restating his original theme: Labor must mobilize more and more forces, labor must learn to cooperate with more and more organizations, labor must build unity and must join hands with the farmers. Keep the membership informed, Murray counseled, let them know the facts, and show them what the people can do.

All this is splendid. Better still, Mr. Murray's policies are already being given substance. The CIO has set up a two-man full-time legislative office with an adequate staff. The steel workers have authorized a legislative bureau. The United Automobile Workers are sending two of their leaders—Richard Frankensteen and Walter Reuther—to Washington, where they will open an office. In Ohio last week, at a conference of United Electrical locals (so one of the delegates told me), a speaker was wildly applauded when he declared: "I know we have the intelligence, resources, stamina, and courage to do something. It is up to us." The idea percolates into cities and communities that policies can be made by the people.

For those of us who spend our time in the nation's capital, this idea seems terribly important. Despite Washington's isolation, despite its separation from the life of America, it nevertheless reflects fairly accurately political realities. When the profiteers and the NAM followers of the du Pont family are on the warpath, with no real opposition speaking for the masses, then reaction here has a field day. But once the people stir, reaction finds itself at a disadvantage. President Murray is so indisputably correct when he emphasizes that President Roosevelt has the right to expect pressure from the people—and pressure that can be felt.

At lunch on the day the 78th Congress convened I asked Vito Marcantonio what he expected from the new Congress. "That's pretty much dependent on what goes on outside of Washington," he answered. "A few parades of home-town folks past a few congressmen's houses can do wonders. Demonstrations, mass meetings, organizational meetings back in the communities discussing the issues and the war—that is what can make all the difference."

CONGRESSMEN are pretty practical people. They usually know the score. Most of them don't like to defy their constituents—if these constituents also know the score. The southern poll taxers and their friends among the Republicans won't get to first base if an organized howl is heard throughout the country. The sooner the howl is raised, the better. The bad boys have the ax sharpened and are out for blood.

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LENIN: GIANT OF CULTURE

John Marten highlights facts little known to Americans. The Soviet leader's love for the "Enlighteners." The basis of Soviet patriotism. Where the New York "Times" errs.

IT HAS of late become the vogue, particularly among the infernally clever pundits of the New York *Times,* to dwell on the "revival" of Russian patriotism. The argument runs something like this: An integral part of Marxist-Bolshevik ideology has always been a rejection of anything that smacks of love for one's country and one's people. But man is man, and one of his eternal characteristics is this very love for country. Despite all Bolshevik teachings and ideology, human nature, when put to the test in the course of the present war, reasserted itself. Russians fight like lions because they love their country, and the Bolsheviks, especially Stalin, being realists, hastened to take advantage of this patriotic feeling in order to save themselves and their regime.

What these gentlemen overlook or do not know is that Marxist internationalism does not mean anti-nationalism. Quite the contrary. From its very inception the Bolshevik regime, more than any regime in history, fostered the national languages and cultures of all the numerous peoples comprising the USSR. What these gentlemen overlook—out of ignorance or design—is the indisputable fact that alongside of Russian patriotism, there is in the Soviet Union Ukrainian patriotism, Armenian patriotism, Georgian patriotism, and so on including the smallest and most remote and once backward nationalities in the Soviet Union. What they fail to realize is that, with all divisive factors in the relations among the Soviet peoples practically removed, local national patriotism, instead of clashing with the larger patriotism embracing the whole Union, actually strengthens it and, as the war has demonstrated, renders it invincible. It is not only Russians who are fighting in the Soviet armies, and it is not only Russians who have distinguished themselves by their heroic struggle against the fascist invaders.

Is it true that the Russian Bolsheviks ever followed an anti-patriotic line? Slanderous nonsense! They were against imperialist *chauvinism,* which under the czar led the country to disaster, but as defenders of the interests of the people the Bolsheviks were always very conscious patriots. The difference between their patriotism and the "patriotism" of the czarist reactionaries was a difference of content. On this nineteenth anniversary of his death one need only read Lenin, whose work constitutes the very soul of Bolshevism, to realize with what intense love and pride he spoke of Russia, the Russian people, their language, their literature, and their revolutionary heritage.

Lenin's ideas on art and culture in general stem directly from his attitude of profound love for the people, the masses. To them he looked for the ultimate creative power from which is derived our entire cultural heritage. "Art belongs to the people," he told Clara Zetkin. "It must have its deepest roots in the broad masses of the toilers. It must be understood and loved by them. It must be rooted in and grow with their feelings, thoughts and desires. It must arouse and develop the artist in them." Schools for the people, libraries for the people, culture for the people, newspapers for the people—these are the refrains to almost everything he wrote and said.

At the same time Lenin did not fall into the mistake of supposing that a creative artist must himself come from the exploited masses in order to make a great contribution. Whatever his class origin and associations, however reactionary his initial outlook, if he is sensitive to human suffering, he must needs become in some degree an ideologist of the democratic masses, expressing in one way or another their plaints and hopes, their sorrows and dreams.

This attitude formed the basis of Lenin's immense pride in Russia's cultural heritage. Lenin always insisted that the finest values of Russia's past emerged out of a progresive democratic culture. Even writers and artists born into the nobility and the bourgeoisie, the best of them, were in varying degrees, and often in spite of themselves, inimical to the exploiting classes and by their truthful depiction of their milieu contributed towards the people's liberation. Lenin's reference to Gogol, for instance, as a "writer dear to every decent person in Russia," was made in full knowledge of Gogol's aristocratic origin, reactionary ideas, and mystical aberrations. Nevertheless Gogol's *Dead Souls, Inspector General,* and *The Cloak* gave a devastating picture of decay in serf-owning and bureaucratic Russia, an explosive satire wrought with superb artistry and truth. They thus became a force to accelerate the end of serfdom and the evils of Russian autocracy. (The Gogol who was true to reality was also true to his own conscience and to the hopes and desires of the Russian masses.)

Similarly, and for similar values, Lenin admired Goncharov, author of the novel *Oblomov.* This writer was a reactionary landowner, but he was a great realistic artist at the same time. He knew his serf-owning Russia, and he described it with a vividness and penetration few have matched. He was so successful in portraying the decaying feudal order and its ruinous effect on essentially good and lovable people that within a short time the hero's very name, Oblomov, and the term Oblomovism, had become parts of the Russian language, signifying laziness, lack of will, inability to reach decisions. Lenin made use of the term Oblomovism frequently in his articles and speeches.

THE writers whom Lenin regarded most highly and to whom he traced the spiritual origins of Russian social democracy were the "enlighteners." These, according to his account, were a group of mid-nineteenth century writers who were "animated by a burning hatred for serfdom and everything it breeds in the economic, social, and juridical fields," who stood up in "fervid defense of education, self-government, freedom, European forms of life, and the general all-round Europeanization of Russia." They "fought for the interests of the popular masses, mainly the peasants," sincerely believing that the "abolition of serfdom and its vestiges would bring in its wake the welfare of all," and sincerely desiring "to work to this end."

The typical "enlighteners" Lenin had in mind were Herzen, Belinsky, Chernyshevsky, and Dobroliubov. Herzen, the son of a rich land-owning aristocrat, was born in 1812, the year of Russia's popular war against Napoleon. His childhood was spent in an atmosphere of patriotic upsurge, accompanied by a growing interest among the intelligentsia in the libertarian ideals of the French Revolution. When the Decembrist rebellion occurred during his boyhood, he vowed to avenge its victims and to dedicate himself to the struggle "against this throne, against this altar, against these cannon." As student, as writer, as revolutionary democrat, and finally as exile, he did his best to carry out this vow. The chronicle of his efforts is recorded in his immortal autobiography, *Byloie i Dumi.*

True, Herzen's "socialism" was of a dubious nature. As Lenin remarked, it had not a grain of genuine science in it. Considering the political circumstances it could be nothing else than "a loftily noble phrase, a good dream in which at that time the bourgeois democracy enwrapped its revolutionism." Yet Lenin held Herzen in high esteem. Of him he wrote:

"The Decembrist uprising awakened and 'purified' him. In the feudal Russia of the forties of the last century, he was able to rise to such heights as to attain the level of the greatest thinkers of his time. He had mastered the Hegelian dialectic. He understood that it constituted the 'algebra of revolution.' He went beyond Hegel, and followed Feuerbach to materialism. . . .

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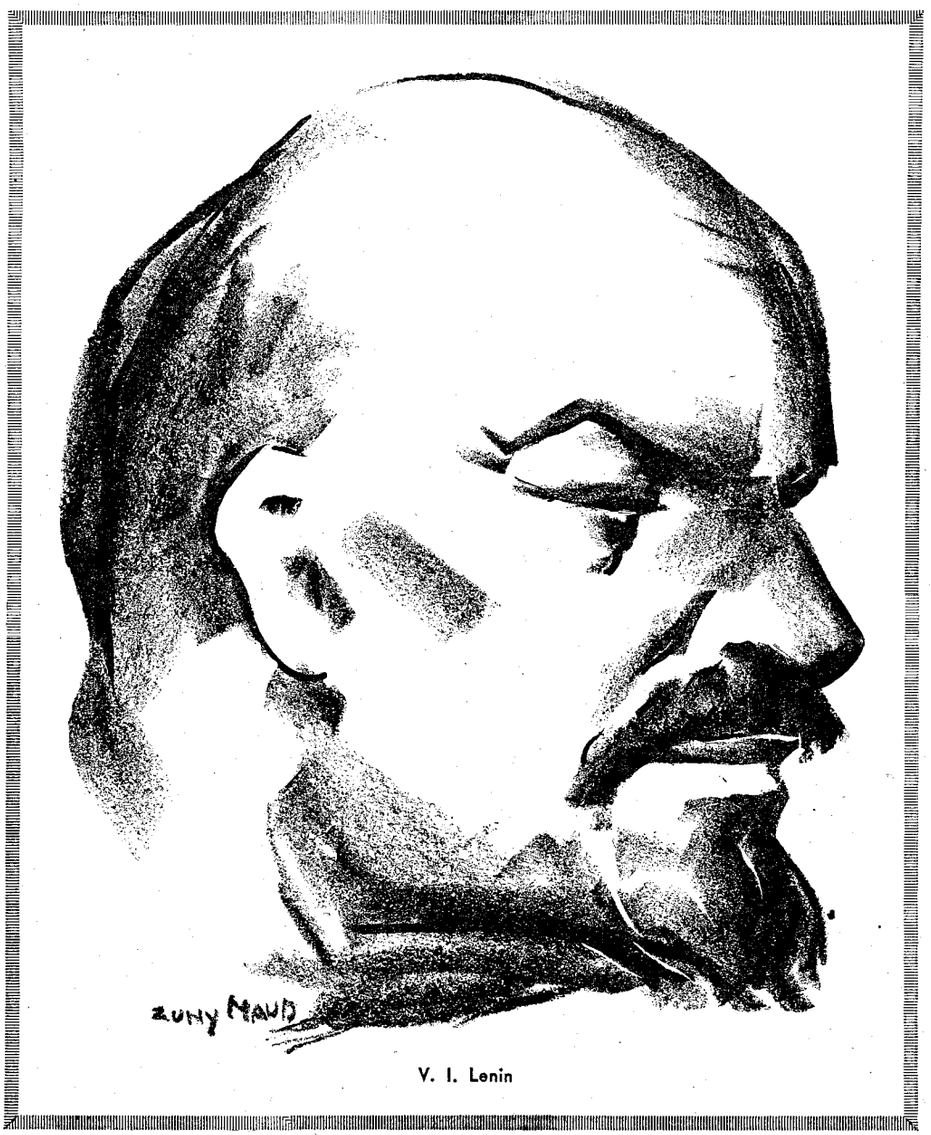

V. I. Lenin

Herzen advanced to the very borderline of dialectical materialism, and halted only before historical materialism."

Vissarion G. Belinsky (1811-48), another of the "enlighteners," was the founder of Russian literary criticism and the enthusiastic propagandist of the then emerging Russian literature. He was the first commoner in the literary and libertarian movement. Exceedingly sensitive to esthetic values, he nonetheless boldly proclaimed the principle that art is a most important weapon in the social struggle. The critical trend thus initiated by him dominated Russian literary and other art criticism for over a century, including the period after the October Revolution. He was the first to discover the new democratic elements in the works of the great Russian writers of his time: Pushkin, Lermontov, Gogol, Nekrasov, Turgenev, Koltsov, and others.

The "enlighteners" closest to Lenin's heart, however, were the two great revolutionary commoners, the collaborators Dobroliubov and Chernyshevsky. Of them he said admiringly that "even in feudal Russia . . . they managed to tell the truth, now by keeping silent concerning the February 19, 1861, manifesto, now by deriding and stigmatizing the liberals of the time." Dobroliubov died at the age of twenty-four, but he left a great body of work behind him which testifies to his passionate hope for a popular uprising against tyranny. Lenin's high estimate of him was anticipated by Marx and Engels: Marx placed Dobroliubov on a plane with Lessing and Diderot, and Engels called Chernyshevsky and Dobroliubov "the two socialist Lessings."

Of all the Russian writers and thinkers it was Chernyshevsky who influenced Lenin most. He regarded Chernyshevsky as the greatest Russian thinker of the nineteenth century; as one of the keenest minds to emerge in the entire history of the country, and as the first and most consistent materialist in Russian philosophy. About him Lenin uses such phrases as "the great Russian Hegelian and materialist," "the remarkably keen critic of capitalism," and "the all-Russian democrat-revolutionist." He read and reread him many times, studying not only his philosophy, but also his style, his method of presenting complex ideas in simple understandable Russian. Even Chernyshevsky's novel *What Is to Be Done?* he read several times, despite his recognition of its inadequacies on the formal side. According to Lenin's wife, Krupskaya, he loved this novel. "I was amazed," she tells us, "how attentively he read it and how aware he was of whatever subtle touches it contained. But then he loved the whole image of Chernyshevsky, and his Siberian album has two portraits of this writer pasted in it."

Chernyshevsky was also a socialist; a Utopian socialist, to be sure, but a socialist nonetheless. The serfs had just been emancipated in Russia; capitalism was in its infancy, the proletariat was still practically non-existent. The restless intelligentsia turned to the *mir,* the primitive peasant commune, which to one then seeking for a socialist solution seemed an ideal basis for the introduction of the new order. That was the historically conditioned truth Chernyshevsky saw, and under the circumstances of Russia at that time he could see no other.

Lenin further revered Chernyshevsky for the skill and self-sacrifice with which he contrived to infuse into a whole generation of young people a flaming faith in revolutionary humanism. He did this despite censorship, prison, and exile. Lenin was particularly fond of quoting this passage from Chernyshevsky in his clashes with opportunists and compromisers: "The road of history is not the sidewalk of the Nevsky Prospect; it runs wholly through fields, now dusty, now muddy, through swamps, through debris. If you fear being covered with dust and having your boots smeared with mud, don't undertake any social activity. This is an occupation that may be of benefit to men only if you earnestly think of men's good."

IN THE early years of his revolutionary career, Lenin's most acrimonious ideological battles were waged against the narodniks, a populist revolutionary group which regarded the peasantry as the chief vehicle of the emancipation of the Russian people. Lenin regarded the narodnik philosophy as obsolete and hence a tremendous obstacle in the path of the Russian Revolution. His objections were based on his Marxist analysis of the historical trends in Russia, the development of capitalist relations in the city and the country, the emergence of a working class, the class differentiations in the villages, and so on. By ignoring the only powerful and advanced force truly capable of waging an organized struggle against autocracy—the developing proletariat—and by centering their hopes and efforts on the peasantry, the narodniks were wasting their own and the people's revolutionary energy. When the narodnik fallacy was taken over by the Social Revolutionaries, Lenin carried on the struggle against the latter. As is well known, Lenin saw in the proletariat because of its decisive role in production the eventual emancipator of all mankind, the leader of the masses into a freer and hap-

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pier existence. This larger view caused him to preach the closest alliance between the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia. His thesis served as a corner stone of Bolshevik policy. It was attacked from two points of view: by those who followed the Social Revolutionary line of exclusive orientation towards the peasantry, and by those who followed Trotsky's line of more or less ignoring the peasantry (the overwhelming majority of Russia's population) as a factor in the revolution. Debates over the issue affected literature as well as politics. Their influence can be traced in conflicting cultural trends and policies under the Soviets.

At the same time Lenin, unlike the more mechanical historians self-styled as Marxists, never underestimated the positive contributions of the narodnik movement to politics and culture.

FUNDAMENTAL to an understanding of Lenin's approach to art is his attitude to the narodnik creative writers. It parallels in many ways his attitude to Tolstoy. Lenin not only recognized the progressive and democratic elements in the narodnik philosophy which he otherwise opposed, but he evinced high regard for their novelists, poets and short story writers, because they truthfully portrayed the suffering and oppression of the peasantry and stirred active opposition in the hearts of the backward and downtrodden. He went so far as to maintain in conversation that the critical and creative literature of the narodniks was in no contradiction to Marxism; that, on the contrary, it suggested the imminence of "grandiose upheavals, eruptions and revolutions" in Russia. Later he urged upon Gorky the necessity of giving to the masses all the old revolutionary narodnik literature, "as much as may be found here and in Europe."

An outstanding nineteenth century Russian writer very close to the narodniks was Gleb Uspensky. Commenting on his works, Lenin practically ignored the narodnik philosophy and concentrated on their content, on the remarkable realism with which they revealed the growth of capitalist relations in rural and urban Russia. They thus constituted splendid refutations of narodnik dogmas despite their ideological errors. The author's strength lay in his uncanny knowledge of the peasantry and his ability, by sheer creative genius, to penetrate to the very essence of the things he saw. Lenin's own writings show his indebtedness to the brilliantly realistic images in Uspensky's works. He used the latter's "forgetful Ivans" and his "heroes of the coupon" to refute the very philosophy which Uspensky upheld.

The narodniks also claimed Lenin's—and Stalin's—beloved writer Saltykov-Shchedrin as one of their school. But that did not deter Lenin from extolling him and urging the widest popularization of his works. From them he culled memorable literary images whenever opportunity presented itself. He said of Saltykov-Shchedrin and of the poet Nekrasov that they taught people to distinguish the predatory interests of the aristocrat serf-owner under his smooth exterior, and to hate the hypocrisy and soullessness of such types.

Lenin was enormously proud of the heroic and socially responsive character of Russia's classical literature in general, as well as the achievements of individual literary figures. These, he felt, had given expression and even guidance to the people's struggle for freedom. Their contribution was an essential part of the history of Russia in politics as well as culture. It was they who had moved forward Russian political thought and established and preserved among the intelligentsia a noble revolutionary tradition; it was they who sowed among the masses the ideas of democracy and socialism.

Although recognizing that the traditionally heroic, realistic culture of Russia was rooted in the masses, Lenin also was aware of the importance of the intelligentsia in developing advanced theories during the nineteenth century. Without sound political theory, he insisted, there was no sound political practice; and without an "advanced" theory, no party could play the role of an advanced fighter. Hence the importance he attached to those who had crystallized the theory of the proletarian revolution, and even to the forerunners of that theory. He asserted unconditionally that "social democratic consciousness" in Russia had evolved not within, but outside the working class, independently of the "spontaneous" growth of the labor movement. Not one of the revolutionary writers and theoreticians of the period was of worker or peasant origin; yet it was they who, according to Lenin, were the originators and early propagators of social democratic ideas. Their function illustrated the close relationship of theory to the practice of social change.

THOUGH critical of the weaknesses of the intellectuals as a social group, Lenin at the same time stressed the continuity of the intelligentsia's revolutionary tradition. When he projected an organization of professional social-democratic revolutionists, he took the prominent participation of intellectuals for granted, insisting only that in such an organization "all distinctions between workers and intellectuals, let alone all distinctions between the individual professions among the former and the latter, must be completely obliterated." His whole idea was not of course to reduce the revolutionary intelligentsia in the organization to the intellectual level of the workers, but rather the opposite, to raise the worker revolutionists to the intellectual level of the best sections of the intelligentsia.

Lenin valued highly the Tolstoyan heritage. But he was selective, discarding much of what he deemed obsolete and harmful in it and retaining only what he considered vital and socially useful. He warned particularly against any attempt to idealize Tolstoy's teachings and against justifying or making less objectionable his doctrines of non-resistance, his appeal to "spirit" and conscience and vague universal "love," his sermons on asceticism and quietism. These, as he pointed out, could only work harm. But in much of Tolstoy's work he found a rich heritage for the working class to make its own and to work upon.

This attitude toward tradition, heritage, history—the past—is typical, in short, of all Lenin's writings. Whether he deals with literature, philosophy, art, the intelligentsia, or the Russian people, the attitude is always that of an activist, a revolutionist. Though he is reverent, he is not undiscriminating. And his patriotism, his intense pride in his people and his country, is also largely an expression of the same attitude. In his own words: "Is the feeling of national pride alien to us, the class conscious workers of Great Russia? Of course not! We love our language and our fatherland, and we devote most of our labor to the raising of the toiling masses of our country (i.e., nine-tenths of its population) to the conscious life of democrats and scialists. What pains us most is to see and feel how the tsarist hangmen, landlords and capitalists violate, oppress, and humiliate our beautiful fatherland. And we are proud of the fact that the stiffest resistance to this violence has come from our midst, from among the Great Russians; that it is we Great Russians who produced Radishchev, the Decembrists, the revolutionary commoners of the seventies; that it was the Great Russian proletariat that had created in 1905 a mighty revolutionary mass party; that it was the Great Russian peasant who had at the same time begun to become a democrat, had begun to overthrow the priest and the landlord. . . . We are full of the feeling of national pride, pride that the Great Russian nation too has created a revolutionary class, that it too has proved that it is capable of presenting mankind with great examples of struggle for freedom and for socialism, and not only with great pogroms, rows of scaffolds, prisons, great famines, and great servility before priests, tsars, landlords and capitalists."

Today the Great Russian people, together with all the peoples of the Soviet Union, fight to defend a land in which the best traditions have achieved a new and larger fruition and the worst are only a memory of the past. Under the leadership of Lenin's close associate, the son of the Georgian people, Joseph Stalin, the peoples of the USSR join with those of many other countries in defense of their national heritage, their culture, their future. The men and women of the Soviet Union carry on Lenin's work, and their achievements today, which excite the admiration of the entire world, are his imperishable memorial.

JOHN MARTEN.

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Ration coupon books in process of preparation.

"FAIR SHARES"

That's what the British call their rationing system. What we can learn from our ally in judicious spreading of necessities and in price-control. Putting the finger on Jesse Jones in the gasoline shortage.

THE British Information Service had arranged a press conference for one of the numerous English visitors to this country—Jack Jones, a former official of the Mine Workers Federation. The reporters asked and Mr. Jones answered the usual questions about the differences between Americans and their British cousins. But he also made some remarks of particular interest to Americans right now—about his country's "wonderful" rationing system and how it works. "It gives us a sense of comradeship," the gray-haired Englishman said. "We are extremely proud of our rationing system." Indeed, so proud was he that during his tour of America he remained loyal to England's rationing rules, refusing eggs, bacon, and other foodstuffs which have become such delicacies in Britain.

It may be a good idea, before we examine our own rationing, or want of it, to take a look at the system that evokes such loyalty from the English people. There, practically every food item except potatoes and other vegetables plentiful in season is rationed. Certain things, like meat, butter, bacon, are rationed at so many ounces per week for everyone. Others, such as canned vegetables and salmon, are rationed on a point basis; you may spend thirty-two points for salmon or six points for sausage, a dish to which Britons do not take kindly.

All children are provided with fruit juices, cod liver oil, and milk through the National Vitamins and Milk Scheme. Expectant mothers get "priority" ratings for eggs and milk. Canteens set up for munitions workers have first choice in the purchase of cheese and other energy building foods. Bread is sold at a very low price to help make up for the scarcity of other things. For the overwhelming majority of the British people rationing has actually resulted in a healthier diet. Moreover, the system is called "fair shares" and is accurately titled.

COMPARE the British enthusiasm with the prevailing attitude of administration officials toward rationing and price-control. From the time that Leon Henderson took office he wailed that he was, or was about to become, the most unpopular man in America. Elmer Davis told the nation "there is no doubt that rationing is a nuisance." Food Administrator Wickard promised that there would be rationing of "comparatively few foods." The whole program—if one can at this point speak of a program—has been approached timidly, reluctantly, with a piecemeal outlook. OPA officials will tell you that "the American people don't like rationing," though the eviddence seems to point the other way: both the AFL and CIO have come out, in the most clear-cut terms, for rationing of all scarce commodities. All the various consumer organizations for months have been advocating over-all rationing.

It is obvious enough that by the end of 1943 practically every article on American tables will have to be rationed. But, as a certain ad used to put it—if eventually, why not now? True, rationing of canned fruits and vegetables is slated for the end of February and meat will probably come soon after. But the OPA has no definite plans for equitably distributing the supply of milk, butter, and eggs in the near future, although there are stories from all over the country about mothers unable to secure canned milk for their infants, and housewives know firsthand the difficulty of obtaining butter and fresh eggs.

When government officials argue that over-all rationing is impossible they point to that old bugaboo, "administrative difficulties." Do you realize, they ask, how many millions of books must be printed, how much paper work has to be done, how much education? Yet OPA itself states that sugar rationing, requiring the registration of 123,000,000 people, "was carried out with remarkable smoothness." And it boasts of the 1,000 meetings it held with retailers in all parts of the country.

From the British we have borrowed the point rationing system. But we had better take over their aggressive, bold approach toward over-all rationing. Leon Henderson has already paid the penalty for big talk unaccompanied by effective action. But the farm bloc in Congress is after bigger game than Henderson. Already that bloc has been planting rumors that Leon Henderson's successor, former Sen. Prentiss Brown of Michigan, is an advocate of "voluntary price-controls" and less restrictions. Members of the bloc have served warning that if the administration does not emasculate the price control and rationing program, Congress will. They have announced that they will bring in a new parity formula based on farm labor costs which will boost prices at least ten per-cent.

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More than anything else, the farm bloc and he reactionary Republicans are determined to iscredit rationing and smear OPA. To a cer-ain extent they have succeeded pretty well. The people blame OPA for much of the con-usion that has occurred in gas and fuel oil rationing. Yet OPA acts merely as the admin-strative arm for other government agencies n carrying out rationing orders—though few people understand this. Few, for example, blame Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones, who is primarily responsible for nationwide gasoline rationing because he refused to de-velop new sources of rubber for tires.

If New Englanders shiver for lack of fuel oil, they ought to remember that it was the War Production Board and the Petroleum Administration which refused to allow the con-struction of a pipeline to the Atlantic Coast. The complicated licensing system for trucks, which led drivers to mutter about That OPA, was actually drawn up by the Office of De-fense Transportation. As for the delay in food rationing, the executive agency at fault has been the Food Administration. Rationing has suffered from the same lack of over-all central-ized control that has impeded all phases of the war program.

Yet to believe the howls from some sections of Congress, OPA is solely to blame for every-thing. The truth is, of course, that the very congressmen who have screaming-meemies at the sight of a long OPA questionnaire are the very ones who denied that agency sufficient funds to do its job well. More recently they refused to grant OPA the authority to grant subsidies to high-cost producers to keep prices down. The last Reconstruction Finance Corp. bill had a provision granting OPA a credit of $70,000,000 for this purpose but the farm bloc vowed the bill would not pass with such a provision. And they won. The farm bloc feels that if any subsidies are to be passed out, they should go to the "right" people. Apparently the trouble with the subsidies to dairy farmers was that too much of the money seemed to reach small farmers.

OPA, which fought to maintain the subsidy to milk producers, was ordered by Economic Stabilizer James Byrnes to withdraw it—a concession to the farm bloc. Instead of the subsidies, "temporary" retail price increases were allowed, with instructions to the De-partment of Agriculture to effect marketing economies. It remains to be seen whether these economies will be effected; but it is in order to ask Mr. Byrnes why he did not grant a "temporary subsidy" instead.

PRICE-CONTROL, of course, is doubly im-portant in conjunction with rationing, since the latter will mean little without the former; only a very strict price-control will prevent rationable goods from being sold on the black market. Yet what is happening? Henderson and his aides have retreated all too often before the pressure of producers, processors, and wholesalers. While ninety per-cent of all food products are supposedly under price ceilings, the retail price of virtually all foodstuffs has advanced somewhat in the past year. According to OPA the increases were necessary because prices were frozen in March 1942 on goods bought at prices prevailing in 1941. When wholesalers and retailers pur-chased new supplies in 1942, they found prices had jumped ahead considerably, and they pe-titioned OPA to pass the increase all along the line to the consumer.

Last year, for example, apricots sold at forty-eight dollars a ton, this year the growers were asking sixty-three dollars. OPA granted the increase and the price to consumers was upped; but a subsidy to the producers would have prevented any rise in price. In England, where most of the food is imported, the gov-ernment buys the food at the docks and then sells it to processors at a loss in order to keep prices low. Some such system of subsidies should be adopted in this country.

Since May 1942 when the General Maxi-mum Price Order went into effect, the retail cost of food has risen nine percent. Most of this has been due to increases in fresh fruits and vegetables and fish, which are not under price control. Carrots, for example, advanced twenty-one percent in one month. Recent OPA ceilings on potatoes, citrus fruits, and onions offer hope that most fresh vegetables will at last come under price ceilings. How-ever, lard, which is supposedly a controlled product, rose 6.4 percent in price during No-vember, while butter and eggs went up one percent.

Still further increases, although slight, can be expected since OPA has adopted a new method of dollars-and-cents ceilings which allows each retailer to figure his customary markup on a fixed wholesale price. Since wholesale prices are higher this year, the markup will be greater and the cost to the consumer will be higher. The new ceilings are designed to give the consumer a break, enabling him to figure out maximum prices without the use of a slide rule. It is essential that consumers understand price ceil-ings in order to spot violations. A recent OPA survey of 10,000 stores revealed that forty percent were violating price-control reg-ulations. The price ceilings, of course, must be posted in stores. And each rationing order must be tied to fixed price ceilings which are based on enforced quality standards. The new regulations requiring grading on canned veg-etables are an encouraging sign that OPA is beginning to pay more attention to quality standards.

How does the situation shape up for the coming year? Food Administrator Wickard has painted a rosy picture, but to judge from the crisis that has developed in the Depart-ment of Agriculture, it is a much too rosy picture. Food Production Director H. W. Parisius resigned last week with a blast at those who "accept announced 1943 food short-ages as inevitable" and declared that food production could be boosted another twenty percent by "converting American agriculture to an all-out war basis." He wanted to cut down excess cotton and wheat production. He favored large scale aid to small farmers so they could play a bigger role in the food pro-duction program. But he met with opposition from farm bloc-minded officials in the De-partment who are afraid of possible postwar surpluses and believe that the only incentive to greater production is more subsidies to the big farmers. On the whole, farm production will be only "slightly larger" in 1943; short-ages of meat and dairy products will probably be greater than announced.

With a tight food situation looming ahead, rationing of all foods, except cereals and perishable fruits and vegetables, should be undertaken now. To bolster up slimmer meals, large supplies of potatoes and whole wheat bread should be made available at low prices. And we can well follow Eng-land's example in ensuring supplies of milk to infants and both eggs and milk for expec-tant mothers. But setting a ration for each person isn't enough if a considerable propor-tion of the population does not have the means to buy the necessary food. Which is why the food stamp plan should be extended instead of scrapped.

TO CARRY through a successful rationing program, the administration will have to adopt a much bolder approach. No advance notice of rationing orders should be given. Enough education can be carried out through the press and radio, and last-minute details can be worked out in the freezing period dur-ing which retailers will stock up. House-wives who understand the program might well volunteer to stand behind the counters and help their neighbors. It should go with-out saying that all government agencies in-volved in rationing must enlist the support of consumer groups and organized labor. And by "support" I do not mean the backing which these organizations are already eager to give; or "representation" on rationing agencies which is offered them in a half-hearted man-ner. They should be granted actual direction in formulating and carrying out pro-grams. This is particularly true when it comes to the 5,000 local War Price and Rationing Boards which come into closest contact with the people. Today these boards are largely staffed by business men who are opposed to OPA policies. Little attempt has been made to get the wives of trade unionists to help with the day-to-day work of the boards. In Britain the local food control committees are made up of ten consumer representatives and five from the retail food trade. The actual administration work is done by paid execu-tive committees. A similar system might be employed here to give the people a controlling voice.

It is good news that OPA officials have announced they are training 1,500,000 volun-teers to explain the point rationing system. Which shows that these officials have learned something from their past mistakes. It is up to the public now to demonstrate its support for price-control and rationing, to defend OPA from the farm bloc and the defeatists. The key to a successful program is sympa-thetic understanding between the people and the administrators. When this is achieved, American visitors to England will be able to boast about *our* rationing system.

EVA LAPIN.

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I GIVE YOU MY WORD . . . by JOSEPH NORTH

THE STRONG MEN KEEP COMING ON

PARIS was eerie that autumn of '37; the air hung heavy despite the vast promise of *Le Front Populaire*. Like lightning flashes presaging storm came news of Cagoulard plottings and of non-intervention intrigue. The city smoldered, questioning, feverish, and in a great sense, thwarted. You could almost hear the booming of the guns below the Pyrenees, feel their thunder nearing.

I met him on one of the broad streets, a copy of *Ce Soir* under his arm, walking along with a slightly perceptible limp, this big American of twenty-one. He had come up with a troublesome wound, veteran of Jarama and Fuentes del Ebro, and was on his way home. I was struck with his peculiarly quiet bearing of maturity. There was something almost austere in his manner and I attributed it at first to that painful wound which had incapacitated him and which he had ignored until his superiors, observing the agony of pain he had mastered and concealed, insisted that he return home for treatment. We talked that afternoon a great deal about France and about Spain and about our own homeland. "I want a little time," he said shyly, "about a month to myself. It's good to spend a little time with yourself after that down there, just thinking over what happened."

He thought it over, thought deep. He doped out the answers. I remember him saying in that oddly youthful, yet deeply mature way: "The republicans will never lose the war in Spain. It can only be lost in Paris, in London, in Washington."

The strong men keep coming on—that line from Sandburg kept cropping into my head as we talked. I had known—though he never mentioned it—that he was the youngest commander of any battalion in the International Brigade. I had known of his part in that fierce battle at Fuentes del Ebro where the republicans, for the first time in military history, had tried a massed attack of tanks bearing infantry. I knew of the serious wound he had received at the Jarama front and had insisted, despite the pleadings of the doctors, on undertaking the tough task of training the new, zealous recruits who were impatient, at first, with the tedious details of soldiering, anxious only to get in there and take their toll of fascists.

I THOUGHT of our encounter in Paris—"I would like a month to myself to think it over"—when I read Frank Hewlett's UP dispatch from the Buna frontlines the other day. "I heard about Thompson first," the reporter wrote, "from the general commanding this sector, who knew of his daring leadership and fighting qualities." Sergeant Thompson, the dispatch revealed, "led an attack which knocked out four Japanese pillboxes." The story indicated that where the going was dirtiest, there Thompson was.

The UP man asked the Westerner what his peacetime occupation was. "Maybe you won't believe me," the newspaperman reported he said, "but I was an organizer of the Young Communist League for Ohio."

Young Thompson had thought and thought deep.

I DON'T recall meeting, in Spain, Captain Herman J. F. Boettcher, another International Brigader, whose Buna exploits have won him our highest award, the Distinguished Service Cross. I asked some veterans who knew him well over there. One of them, Mike Ehrenburg, told me how Boettcher, recovering from wounds in the hospital at Villa Paz, used to limp around helping the nurses and doctors bring in the precious freight of wounded, and how tenderly he treated them, cheering them with news and stories, sharing the lone cigarette.

Of him, General MacArthur wrote:

"His outstanding leadership and personal heroism inspired his men and were primarily responsible for the success of the action."

Of him, the Australian government wrote:

"Captain Boettcher has gained fame as America's 'one man army,' and the story of his deeds in Papua has been told throughout the world."

THESE are men whose deeds have "been told throughout the world." They are the stuff of America—of varied political groupings but united by one hatred—fascism. And wherever men hate fascists, the deeds of young Communist Bob Thompson and of anti-fascist Captain Boettcher are slogans to fight like lions. For these reasons all true patriots can only be vastly disturbed to learn that the War Department has adopted a policy of segregating the Spanish war veterans, passing word on to keep them from combat duty. For there are hundreds more in this country, nay thousands, who are the brothers of Thompson and Boettcher. There are tens of thousands more, in North Africa, eating their hearts out behind barbed wire.

Though President Roosevelt called for the freedom of all anti-fascists in North Africa, these men are not yet freed. Though Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles called for the unity of all nations fighting Hitler, and for the unity of all within those nations, men considered Communists are segregated, kept from frontline duty they seek.

This is indeed deepest tragedy which must bring glee to the progenitors of the "Anti-Komintern" line in Berlin, Rome, and Tokyo. They sowed their seed well, better than they knew.

I wonder at the silence of many who know better. What has become of those correspondents, for example, who spoke up in Spain for the International Brigades—men like Herbert Matthews, like Ernest Hemingway, who met these men and knew their worth? Will they maintain their silence knowing that these fighting men are kept from their posts?

And do not the stories of Thompson and Boettcher, since Spain, carry a deep moral? Does not the latest news from France, telling of the cooperation of de Gaullists, Conservatives, Communists, and all true patriots, carry an epic lesson?

How long does it take us to learn? How many times must we make the same tragic mistake?

Gentlemen who are responsible, how will you face the men of Buna who have stood the test of fire?

What answers do you have to their questions?

"Why?" they will ask, "do you not give our brothers guns? They are fighters, patriots, just as we are."

What can you say?

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BEHIND THE CHINESE FRONT

Balance sheet of our great ally's struggle. Her problems go beyond purely military considerations. The imperative need for true coalition strategy.

THE first year of China's participation in the war as a member of the United Nations has brought forward certain problems which call for early solution. The year began with China's position, for the time being, worsened rather than improved by the entrance of the United States and Great Britain into the war against Japan. The rapid occupation by the enemy of the Philippines, Netherlands Indies, Indo-China, Malaya, Thailand, and Burma cut the geographical approaches whereby the Chinese armies might be supplied by the Americans and British. While supplies continued to flow over the northwest route from the Soviet Union, the latter had previously been using the Burma Road for most of its war-material aid to China. And that was cut off.

The United States had become involved not simply in a war against Japan in the Pacific, but in a global war against the whole spread of the Axis. Global strategy demanded that America's major effort be directed against Germany. Consequently, first priorities were given to the establishment of a powerful overseas force focused on Europe and to supplying instruments of war to the Soviet Union, without whose heroic defense and counter-offensives the United Nations might well have collapsed. The corollary to a strategy that placed first importance upon smashing Hitlerism was a delay in launching a full scale attack on Japan. Which meant that the use of China as the land base from which Japan was to be knocked out was also held in wait pending the elimination of Hitler's armies and those of his Italian puppet.

THE problems which developed for China in this first year of war with the United Nations went far beyond those arising from purely military considerations. The more serious ones were political. Failure to bring the Indian people into the war as an independent, self-governing nation damaged confidence in the willingness and ability of the British government to make those decisions necessary for mobilizing a maximum effort against fascism. The bitter experiences of the colonies of Southeast Asia, where with few exceptions the people had neither been armed nor given the political incentive to defend themselves against the Japanese, threatened the gigantic colony of India.

Not to solve the India question meant, primarily, that the opportunity was lost to form a great war coalition between the people of China and of India charged with leading all Asia to victory over the forces of fascism and to a new stature of independence and freedom. History will measure that error in terms of a longer and more difficult struggle against the Axis. Unless quickly rectified it will measure it in the postwar period in terms of a multitude of struggles and conflicts which could otherwise have been avoided.

Other problems have arisen which directly affect relations between the United States and China, and therefore affect China's relations with the United Nations as a whole. Two groups of these reached serious proportions toward the end of the first year of our Allied war. The first has to do with China's status within the United Nations machinery for carrying on the war. That China is dissatisfied with the role to which she has been assigned is evident from numerous events and statements.

At the end of the year the Chinese military mission to Washington, led by Lieutenant-General Hsiung Shih-fei, was apparently recalled. It is true that after the announcement of its recall was released, statements were made to the effect that the mission had not been formally recalled. It was explained that General Hsiung was returning to China for a visit and might come back to Washington; it was said that representatives of the mission were remaining in the American capital to maintain liaison with the Combined Chiefs of Staff. The total impression given the public, however, was one of grave Chinese disturbance over the way the Pacific theater of the war was being handled.

THIS impression was buttressed by a number of public complaints voiced by responsible officials of the Chungking government. These complaints were directed toward two points: first, that China had not been accorded a voice in the policy and decision-making bodies which determined the grand strategy of the war; second, and as a consequence of the first condition, that China was being disregarded in the allocation of supplies to the various fighting fronts. The bitter and even angry outbursts of Dr. Lin Yutang in this country, while not representing official Chinese thought, nevertheless served to dramatize the resentment felt by many Chinese at the continued treatment of their country as a secondary nation and at the continued failure of the Anglo-American command to make known any planned strategy of action with respect to the defeat of Japan or the liberation of China and the 110,000,000 inhabitants of southeastern Asia. And Pearl Buck's unfortunate, extremely

Courtesy Museum of Modern Art

"News Arrives"—a Woodcut by the Chinese artist Li Te Hua.

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pessimistic declaration expressed the disillusionment of those Americans who did not grasp the full significance of the anti-fascist war.

WHAT are the facts as to China's status in the United Nations war machinery? They have been referred to in the NEW MASSES "Spotlight," but they deserve repetition. As things stand today the war machinery for the Pacific and Asiatic sectors remains primarily Anglo-American in its composition. The principal military directives come from the Combined Chiefs of Staff, which is a British-American organization having headquarters in Washington. Other members of the United Nations, including China, are not directly represented. They are consulted, on occasion, through their representatives in the American capital. In the operational breakdown of the Combined Chiefs of Staff into various theaters of war in the Pacific, American generals and admirals predominate. Even on the Asiatic mainland, where Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek is nominally commander-in-chief of land operations, it is said that actual contact is maintained through his American subordinates.

There exist under the Combined Chiefs of Staff a series of bodies charged with the distribution of war materials. These include the agencies which allocate munitions, shipping, food, raw materials, and all that is grouped under Combined Production and Resources. These, too, are essentially British-American. China and other members of the United Nations are called upon individually only when matters of specific concern to them arise, and then merely on a consultative basis. The Pacific War Council is the only organization concerned with political and military strategy on which China is an equal member. And the function of that body is nothing more than advisory.

An examination of official Chinese statements indicates that from the Chinese point of view the trouble lies in three directions.

First of all, China is not being treated as an equal among the great nations whose leadership of the United Nations is acknowledged. For four and a half years she not only defended herself successfully against large scale Japanese aggression, but she did so in the face of American and British appeasement of the now common enemy. And today it is Chinese, not American or British, forces that are occupying the attention of the largest portion of the Japanese armed force. China, moreover, is the logical jumping off place for the final offensive that will wipe Japanese militarism off the face of the earth. And yet China is not included in the councils of war that determine the preliminary strategy of this great offensive!

Closely related to the first point, the Chinese government indicates that it is not being supplied with even minimum materials of war—that, as a matter of fact, the war setup is such that it has no opportunity even to present its point of view. And the Chinese remind us that their offer of cooperation in the defense of Burma at the beginning of our war was flatly and insultingly turned down by the British; that even now there is no indication that the Chinese form a part of the command which is conducting a minor offensive along the Burmese coast toward Akyab.

Chinese government officials bring up the problem of their unequal treatment in a third way. They indicate that the second class status accorded China during the war has caused widespread lack of confidence in our intentions after the war. If the conduct of the war remains entirely in American-British hands, will not postwar machinery for collective security be equally dominated by the Anglo-American powers, and will it not be subservient to their interests alone? What do the principles of the Atlantic Charter mean if they are not applicable to the conduct of the war itself? If China is not given equality in the policy- and decision-making bodies now, what can be expected for the colonial peoples, to say nothing of the people of China, after victory has been won?

THE Foreign Minister of China, T. V. Soong, expressed these misgivings in Chungking shortly after his return from Washington. He put forward proposals for their correction. They are not very different from the proposals which Wendell Willkie has been making in this country, for very much the same reasons. Dr. Soong has called for the immediate formation of an Executive Council of the United Nations charged with executive and directive powers in the conduct of the war. The proposal would not only eliminate the present problem of Anglo-American domination; it would also furnish for the first time an organization sponsored by all the United Nations equipped to implement the Atlantic Charter, to begin postwar planning, and it would itself comprise the nucleus of the postwar world organization for which Vice-President Wallace and others have spoken.

In a radio speech on January 2 Mr. Willkie said, "We will have no United Nations after the war unless we make the United Nations now a fact and not a mere euphonious phrase . . . the United Nations must become a common council not only for the winning of the war but for the future welfare of mankind." What we need, then, is not a mere aspiration toward a world organization after the war, but an actual working council of the United Nations today—"a council in which all plan together, not a council of a few, who direct or merely aid others as they think wise."

Others have suggested an immediate conference of the United Nations out of which would come a complete machinery for the winning of victory and the healthy beginning of a future security organization hammered out on the tough anvil of the war. Whether we lean toward Dr. Soong's proposal, toward Mr. Willkie's, or toward any other designed to make the strategy of victory a common purpose in which all members of the United Nations alliance participate, it is clear that the necessities of war demand early action in those directions.

WE HAVE so far been concerned primarily with China's external relations after more than a year of alliance with the United Nations. We have left unmentioned the question as to whether or not China was, in fact, a nation which in the course of the war had achieved its independence from a pre-war semi-colonial position. We have not asked whether the difficulties which lay in the way of a complete coalition were all on one side.

Well, when the fogs of sentiment and of propaganda are blown aside, the answer is partly no—China has not yet welded itself into a unified nation, China has not yet completely freed itself of the shackles of semi-colonialism, China today is not putting forward its maximum strength against the common enemy, Japan. Difficulties in the way of complete understanding with the leaders of the United Nations remain to be solved in China itself. We must not fall into the error of interpreting these difficulties in a way which will be divisive or defeatist, any more than we can fall into the same error in analyzing our own deficiencies. In both cases we must keep our minds firmly on those aspects of the situation which are today impeding the war effort. And only by defining those aspects and making them known can we hope to find their solution and with their solution a stronger, more effective unity among the Allied nations.

Chinese government leaders have pleaded for foreign aid and for foreign recognition from an admission of internal weakness. The weakness they have depicted is one of lack of arms, planes, tanks, oil, and other materials of war. They have described their situation as desperate. They have, indeed, not infrequently hinted at imminent collapse if aid were not quickly forthcoming. It is true that their internal situation is grave. Certainly they do not have the military equipment they need to roll back the Japanese hordes. But, as the current issue of *Amerasia* comments, "The Chinese armies have done as well if not better during this past year than in any of their previous five years of war, and have scored notable victories in every part of China."

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The weakness to which government publicists refer is not China's real weakness. It reflects, rather, a serious situation which, while fully deserving appeals for its relief, is frequently exploited to hide the fundamental internal weakness of China. To quote *Amerasia* again, "If Chinese spokesmen like Dr. Lin [Lin Yutang] and General Hsiung [of the Chinese military mission] complain that China lacks arms and supplies for any offensive action, what can be said about the 600,000 guerrilla troops in North and Central China under the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies, which have not received a single gun from the Central Government in over three years and have still been able to engage forty percent of all Japanese forces in China, account for more than 300,000 enemy casualties and take some 50,000 prisoners?" And the appeal made by these guerrillas is not for more aid from abroad, but for greater internal unity.

CHINA'S great weakness today lies in her internal disunity. By no means all the nation's resources are concentrated on the all-important task of defeating Japan.

One million Kuomintang troops remain immobilized from the fighting front against Japan because they are engaged in blockading the areas in which the Chinese guerrillas operate and in which democratic political and economic institutions have been introduced under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. If these forces and their equipment were liberated for an all-out war against Japan, the already impressive showing of the Chinese armies would be substantially improved.

The guerrilla areas' blockade and the continued political blockade of the Chinese Communists by the Kuomintang has naturally been partly successful in preventing the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies from fulfilling their maximum potentialities against the enemy. When it is realized that even under these handicaps they have been able to engage forty percent of all Japanese forces in China and inflict heavy casualties, the effect of their increased power under conditions of internal unity can be appreciated.

Underlying the blockade is the fear of certain powerful, reactionary elements in the Kuomintang that the necessities of war will bring a spread of agrarian reform and of other democratic institutions on which national unity must be based. Six weeks ago the Communist leader Mao-Tse- aid, after describing the economic olitical steps taken in the northwest, se measures are intended to unite peo- f all classes so that they may unite their es to resist Japanese aggression and to onstruct the nation. Such a policy is a policy of democracy, not of one-party rule. It is a policy which fits in with Chinese national conditions, and we hope that it will be realized not only within the various anti-Japanese bases behind the enemy's lines but also throughout the whole country."

Courtesy United China Relief

Chinese refugees from towns devastated by the enemy.

The meaning of these words and the condition which they were designed to correct are identical with the significance of the declaration of policy recently made by Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles in reply to Earl Browder's article in which the latter raised the issue of China's internal strife as damaging to the war effort. In that declaration Mr. Welles stated, "This government desires Chinese unity and deprecates civil strife in China . . . it regards unity within China, unity within the United States, unity within each of the countries of the United Nations group, and unity among the United Nations as utterly desirable toward effectively carrying on war against the Axis powers and toward the creation and maintenance of conditions of just peace when the United Nations shall have gained the victory which is to be theirs." This American declaration was immediately cabled in full to newspapers in Chungking, but the Chinese government refused to permit its publication.

There is an interdependence between these two sets of problems, between China's internal unity, her ability to wage total war, on the one hand; and, on the other hand, China's relations with the other United Nations in the political and military councils of war. Progress in the achievement of internal unity will dynamically affect her relations with her allies. And every move made by Great Britain and the United States toward granting China a position of greater equality will favorably influence China's internal conditions. No more vivid proof of the latter can be asked than the universal enthusiasm with which the Chinese welcomed the new treaties abolishing extra-territorial and other unequal privileges. In return, the further improvement of China's status among the United Nations will be helped by the elimination of internal disunity and by the rapid spreading of democratic reforms. Only then will China break completely from the semi-colonial institutions which still so greatly hamper her ability to wage total, unrestricted war.

It is up to the Chinese people to overcome their own internal difficulties. Our problem, as Americans, is to help the Chinese win their own unity by bringing about greater unity, more equality, and a truer democracy among all the United Nations.

Toward that end the United States and Great Britain must invite China to full participation in the machinery which is mapping out and executing the strategy to a final unconditional victory.

FREDERICK V. FIELD.

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ANDREW JOHNSON ON RECORD

A little known government report, made in 1866, gives the lie to MGM's glorification of a President who betrayed the aims of the Civil War.

"Things are seldom what they seem;
Skim milk masquerades as cream."

THE publicity office of MGM is working overtime to propagate the illusion that *Tennessee Johnson* is an authentic historical document. The more crudely the film butchers the truth, the more noisily does MGM proclaim its sudden conversion to the austere life of scholarship. And some reviewers have sanctioned the myth by calling the film a "remarkably accurate biography" *(Herald Tribune)* and "notably faithful to the facts" *(Time Magazine)*.

Hypocrisy, it has been said, is the homage that vice pays to virtue; and I suppose the producers should get a penny's worth of credit for making this flattering gesture to historical science. And an iron cross, I hasten to add, for the most disruptive film of the war period, not to say the most blatant distortion of American history since that delirious trilogy *Gone With the Wind, Oliver Wiswell,* and *Santa Fe Trail.*

Well, what are the facts? I want to cite only one episode in the career of President Johnson that, for my money, tells the whole story in a nutshell. I am not going to embroider this story, since MGM's publicity releases have thrown me into a mood of desperately impartial scholarship.

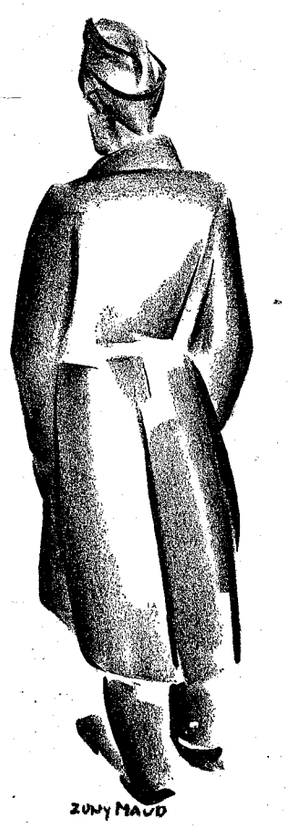
The story will not be found in the biographies that try to exalt Johnson in the spirit of MGM. It will not be found in the 881 pages of Stryker's life of Johnson because it would demolish his subtitle, "A Study in Courage." Nor in the 549 pages of Winston's biography because it would ridicule his subtitle, "Plebeian and Patriot." And George Fort Milton, who boorishly calls Thaddeus Stevens "the Pennsylvania Caliban," refers to it briefly in his hate-bent *The Age of Hate* only to twist it into its opposite.

My story is found only in the official government records. Exhibit A, and my sole witness, is a manual of laws, speeches, and presidential interviews compiled for the year 1866 by the clerk of the House of Representatives, Hon. Edward McPherson, Doctor of Laws. The script is authored by the government stenographer.

ON FEB. 7, 1866, a delegation of Negro leaders from various states came to Washington. Their purpose was to urge the interests of their newly freed people before the government. Specifically, they came to secure voting rights for Negroes. Without the franchise, they believed, freedom is delusive. As the most distinguished member of the delegation, Frederick Douglass, put it in his autobiography, "The liberties of the American people were dependent upon the ballot box, the jury box, and the cartridge box."

And so they came to Washington, ten men besides Douglass. The Great Emancipator had been assassinated the year before, and they must now deal with the new President from Tennessee. Up to February 7, as Douglass later observed, the country was not fully aware of Johnson's intentions and policy with respect to Reconstruction, particularly as it affected the Negro people. The whole world waited anxiously for a clear declaration that would show whether Johnson was to fulfill the democratic aspirations of the Civil War or frustrate the principles for which so many hundreds of thousands in the Union had fought and bled.

A momentous occasion, therefore, this interview between the colored delegation and Johnson, a possible turning point in American history.



After an exchange of greetings, George T. Downing presented the views of his colleagues: "It is our desire for you to know that we come feeling that we are friends meeting a friend. . . . We come to you in the name of the colored people of the United States. We are delegated to come by some who have unjustly worn iron manacles on their bodies—by some whose minds have been manacled by class legislation in states called free."

The Negroes of this country, continued the spokesman, are not satisfied with an amendment prohibiting slavery. This amendment must be enforced with appropriate legislation: the right to vote. "We respectfully submit," said Downing, "that rendering anything less than this will be rendering to us less than our just due; that granting anything less than our full rights will be a disregard of our just rights and of due respect for our feelings."

A speech modest, respectful, but firm. And when Downing concludes, Frederick Douglass steps forward and addresses the President. He has no set speech for the occasion, he explains, merely some observations that express the feelings of the delegates and the millions they represent: "Your noble and humane predecessor placed in our hands the sword to assist in saving the nation, and we do hope that you, his able successor, will favorably regard the placing in our hands the ballot with which to save ourselves. We shall submit no argument on that point. The fact that we are the subjects of government, and subject to taxation, subject to volunteer in the service of the country, subject to be drafted, subject to bear the burdens of the State, make it not improper that we should ask to share the privileges of this condition."

Again a talk that is modest, respectful, but firm.

Will Johnson's answer be in the same vein? Will he live up to his "noble and humane predecessor?"

THE President begins. "I am a friend of humanity," he announces, "and especially the friend of the colored man." With virtuous emphasis he tells the delegates that he has given up everything for the colored man: "I have owned slaves and bought slaves, but I never sold one." (The President does

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not indicate how this proves he is a friend of the colored people.) ". . . I have been their slave instead of their being mine." (The President does not explain this cryptic remark.) But—and this is the first of endless but's—"I do not like to be arraigned by some who can get up handsomely-rounded periods and deal in rhetoric, and talk about abstract ideas of liberty, who never periled life, liberty, or property."

This is beginning to sound ominous. Did not Garrison risk his life when he defied the broadcloth mob that dragged him with a rope through the streets of Boston? Did not Wendell Phillips sacrifice his high social position and his law career? Lovejoy had lost his life at Alton, and Birney his newspaper at Cincinnati, and Follen his job at Harvard. And John Brown at Harper's Ferry? Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner, Frederick Douglass himself? And Sumner caned into unconsciousness on the Senate floor by Brooks of South Carolina? "Abstract ideas . . . never periled. . . . "?

Let us be practical, the President goes on, continuing a harangue which, as Douglass later noted, was a lengthy set speech clearly intended for the morning papers rather than for the delegation. It's all very well to talk about "the Declaration of Independence and equality under the law." I repeat, I am against slavery, but—but to give Negroes the vote would result in a "contest between the races" and "extermination." Besides, "let us look each other in the face," suppose we give the Negroes the vote tomorrow, "how much would that ameliorate their condition at this time?"

As the stenographer notes in a bracket, Johnson now approaches very near to Mr. Douglass, who tries to speak: "Mr. President, do you wish—" But Johnson holds the floor. And then with staggering ignorance for a friend of the colored man he asks the slave-born Douglass:

"Have you ever lived upon a plantation?"

"I have, your excellency."

"When you would look over and see a man who had a large family, struggling hard upon a poor piece of land, you thought a great deal less of him than you did of your own Master's Negro, didn't you?"

"Not I!" Douglass exclaims.

THE discussion goes on in this manner, with Johnson shifting, weaving, cutting off answers to arguments that he has provoked. He now begins to explain that after all majority rule is majority rule, and the people of the South do not want the Negroes to vote.

"Do you deny," asks Johnson, "that first great principle of the right of the people to govern themselves? Will you resort to an arbitrary power, and say a majority of the people shall receive a state of things they are opposed to?"

Douglass reminds the Republican President that this was just what the pro-slavery Democrats said before the war.

"I am now talking about a principle; not

what somebody else said," Johnson barks.

At this point Mr. Downing interposes with a sentence meriting immortality:

"Apply what you have said, Mr. President, to South Carolina, for instance, where a majority of the inhabitants are colored."

And Tennessee Johnson, by a miracle of strategical evasion, begins to talk of Ohio! "Each community is better prepared to determine the depositary of its political power than anybody else, and it is for the Legislature, for the people of Ohio to say who shall vote, and not for the Congress of the United States."

"Is there anything wrong or unfair in that?"

And Douglass, "smiling," as the stenographer reports: "A great deal that is wrong, Mr. President."

JOHNSON keeps repeating: "God knows I have no desire but the good of the whole human race. . . . God knows that anything I can do I will do." But Douglass, Downing, and the others are not impressed by these global affirmations.

Douglass turns to the delegates. It is clear that the President has taken strong grounds in favor of a policy opposed to theirs. He does not trust his own ability to change Johnson's mind. "But," turning to the President again, "if your excellency will be pleased to hear, I would like to say a word or two in regard to that one matter of the enfranchisement of the blacks as a means of preventing the very thing which your excellency seems to apprehend—that is a conflict of races."

Johnson curtly turns down this request, and the interview ends as follows:

Johnson: "I think you will find, so far as the South is concerned, that if you will all inculcate there the idea in connection with the one you urge, that the colored people can live and advance in civilization to better advantage elsewhere than crowded right down there in the South, it would be better for them."

Douglass: "But the masters have the making of the laws, and we cannot get away from the plantation."

Johnson: "What prevents you?"

Douglass: "We have not the single right of locomotion through the southern states now."

Johnson: "Why not? The government furnishes you with every facility."

Douglass: "There are six days in the year that the Negro is free in the South now, and his master then decides for him where he shall go, where he shall work, how much he shall work—in fact, he is divested of all political power. He is absolutely in the hands of those men."

Johnson: "If the master now controls him or his action, would he not control him in his vote?"

Douglass: "Let the Negro once understand that he has an organic right to vote, and he will raise up a party in the southern states among the poor, who will rally with him. There is this conflict that you speak of between the wealthy slaveholder and the poor man."

Johnson: "You touch right upon the point there. There is this conflict, and hence I suggest emigration. If he cannot get employment in the South, he has it in his power to go where he can get it." (Has he or hasn't he been listening to Douglass?)

So this is what it has come to: emigration! The Pharaohs: emigration. Hitler: emigration. Johnson: emigration.

Chickamauga, Shiloh, the Wilderness, Gettysburg—"He hath loosed the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword"—"Government of the people, by the people, for the people"—"Shouting the Battle Cry of Freedom." All this, all these years of blood and tears and heroic effort, for the exalted right of "emigration"! Booth's bullet had done its work too well.

ON TURNING to leave, Douglass tells his fellow-delegates: "The President sends us to the people, and we go to the people." And Johnson, with words that he is later to regret bitterly: "Yes, sir; I have great faith in the people. I believe they will do what is right."

Years later Douglass recalled that "What was said on that occasion brought the whole question virtually before the American people. . . . From this time onward the question of suffrage for the freedmen was not allowed to rest."

For Douglass did go to the people. That very night of Feb. 7, 1866, the delegation instructed Douglass to draft a reply to Johnson's remarks, which as they correctly surmised were spread over the next morning's papers. It was a memorable document. The President's opinions, it stated, "are entirely unsound and prejudicial to the highest interests of our race as well as our country at large," and "we cannot do other than expose the same, and, as far as may be in our power,

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arrest their dangerous influence."

Cogently, it pointed out that existing hostility between Negroes and whites had its root and sap in slavery, that it was "incited on both sides by the cunning of the masters . . . [who] secured their ascendancy over both the poor whites and the blacks by putting enmity between them." And now that slavery has been abolished, the root cause of the antagonism is removed, and it is illogical to legislate "from slave-holding and slave-driving premises for a people whom you have repeatedly declared your purpose to maintain in freedom."

Moreover, granting for a moment the President's contention that this hostility will *increase* in freedom, "how can you, in view of your professed desire to promote the welfare of the black man, deprive him of all means of defense, and clothe him whom you regard as his enemy in the panoply of political power?"

"Can it be," the delegation asked, "that you would recommend a policy which would arm the strong and cast down the defenseless? Can you, by any possibility of reasoning, regard this as just, fair, or wise? Experience proves that those are oftenest abused who can be abused with the greatest impunity. Men are whipped oftenest who are whipped easiest. Peace between races is not to be secured by degrading one race and exalting another, by giving power to one race and withholding it from another; but by maintaining a state of equal justice between all classes."

AND as to your emigration and colonization theories, Mr. President: "It is impossible to suppose, in view of the usefulness of the black man in time of peace as a laborer in the South, and in time of war as a soldier in the North, and the growing respect for his rights among the people, and his increasing adaptation to a high state of civilization in this his native land, there can ever come a time when he can be removed from this country without a terrible shock to its prosperity and peace. Besides, the worst enemy of the nation could not cast upon its fair name a greater infamy than to suppose that Negroes could be tolerated among them in a state of the most degraded slavery and oppression, and must be cast away, driven into exile, for no other cause than having been freed from their chains."

Is there in our annals a more glorious expression of justice and common sense than this all but forgotten open letter to the President which George T. Downing asked the editor of the *Chronicle* to insert in his columns?

They went to the people. And Johnson, with all his great "faith," placed every conceivable obstacle in the way of the people. The battle had adjourned from Appomattox to Washington, and the President's role was immortally expressed in Wendell Phillips' "Jefferson Davis Johnson." As the great wit of the day, Petroleum V. Nasby, put it: "The President does not believe that power should be concentrated in three or four hundred men in Congress, but thinks it ought to be safely diffused throughout the hands of one man—A. Johnson."

They went to the people, and the people answered with the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution. And this voting rights Amendment was proclaimed not by Johnson, but by the man whom the people had elected in his place, their great war general Grant. On March 30, 1870, Douglass and Phillips could shout: "Io! Triumphe!"

But "We sheathe no sword," a celebration gathering at Steinway Hall was told. "We sheathe no sword. We only turn the front of the army upon a new foe."

Almost a century later we are violently reminded that the sword of Johnson has not been sheathed either. Burnished by MGM, it is turned upon the same foe, the people, national unity, truth, at a crisis of our national existence even more acute than that which tore our land in the last century.

GREENLAND IS AMERICA

Rockwell Kent reviews Vilhjamur Stefansson's new book. "Scholarly and painstakingly accurate."

GREENLAND, *by Vilhjamur Stefansson. Doubleday. $3.50.*

GREENLAND, as Vilhjamur Stefansson writes, is "the largest of islands or smallest of continents" and "is nearly as big as the combined twenty-six states that are east of the Mississippi." It is geographically a part of the Western Hemisphere and was the first land of the new world to be discovered and settled by Europeans. Icelanders colonized Greenland, and before the eleventh century they had established there the first republic of the new world. Greenland, centuries before Columbus bore the cross to America, was a bishopric of the church of Rome. Six hundred and fifteen years before the Mayflower landed its pilgrims on Plymouth Rock, white Greenlanders—men, women, and children to more than twice the number of our pilgrim fathers and their wives—landed with cattle and household goods on a part of our northeastern coast not far, perhaps, from Plymouth Rock. They spent three winters on the mainland of the continent.

The republic of Greenland, following the action of Iceland, abandoned its independence to become a colony of the Norwegian crown, and that crown in course of centuries neglected and forgot its faraway dependency. But the Greenland settlements were doubtless still in existence as decaying outposts of European culture when that culture, this time with fire, sword, and cross, and under the banners of Spain, invaded the American Indies.

GREENLAND is America—or a part of America. And geographically it is a very large part. The popular misconception of Greenland—of its physical geography and climate, of its history, and of its native and colonial life today—would be inexcusable but for the misinstruction that is responsible for it. That misinstruction we neither may nor need now tolerate. From the main truths about Greenland which have long been of public record; from the many clues to the understanding of Greenland's past and of the remoter past of northern exploration and discovery, many of which have lain enshrined in the writings of antiquity and the middle ages and in the ancient archives of the church of Rome; and from his own vast experience of the north and its people, Stefansson has written a book. It is such a book about the north as only Stefansson could write. For it is scholarly and painstakingly accurate. It is gifted with that imagination which thirty years ago made the author the prophet of those northern developments which remained to the Soviet Union to undertake and carry through. And it is written with such charm and humor as makes the reading of it an absorbing pleasure.

Stefansson as a historian is no mere recorder of facts. His long experience, his training as an anthropologist, his flare for the detection of motives and for shrewd deduction from evidence enable him to turn the living sunlight on the past. That living sunlight is at times plain common sense. And God, we're grateful for it! Read, if you like that sort of thing (this writer does), the countless detective works on the Norse voyages to America, on the mystery of the disappearance of the Greenland colonies and of European man that lived in them; become—you will—bewildered by conflicting interpretations of the chiseled or the written word, of concrete evidence of "finds," of geographical landmarks, of distance sailed in terms of days and nights, of the mind of pioneers and navigators. There let yourself be taken by the hand of Stefansson and led, from a beginning far back in ancient times, step by step in natural and inevitable sequence along the paths of the discovery of the northern world, and of America. His book does that.

How convincingly and with what ease he separates the grain of ancient legend from the chaff! And if occasionally, he does such things as identifying St. Brendan's "column in the sea" as an East Greenland glacier—to an artist's eyes no glacier ever looked like that—it is merely the breaching of a rigorously submerged poet's soul. The poet that Stefansson once meant to be, he has remained through science substituting what has often proved to be prophetic vision for the fragile

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unrealities of imagination; creating, as it were, through prophecy, and in the unpopulated wastes of Arctic Siberia, a far more serviceable paradise than a Coleridge by the magic of fine words could build for Kubla Khan.

Of Stefansson's predicted Arctic empire men had, to put it mildly, doubts. To doubt, like other acts, is human. Good then—I doubt: Here or there on the ice free land of Greenland there are unquestionably places level enough by nature and neither too sodden with bog or encumbered with stones to admit of being made into landing fields. I believe that there is none, as is—or, let me say, as was before our occupation—on which a landing could be made with reasonable safety. Up to ten years ago the Danes, at least, had found none. What has been built is quite another thing; and to the reader consulting the end-paper map in *Greenland,* and bearing in mind the curvature of "great circle" courses, the importance of Greenland as an air base is apparent. But the high value of the great plateau of the inland ice as a landing field, that Stefansson claims for it, I doubt. The difficulties of access to it—steep mountain sides or crevassed glaciers—are serious but not, with modern means of road building, insurmountable. The gales that sweep its gentle slopes are fierce. Coming with bitter cold and snow, they've been the death of men who thought they were prepared to meet the worst. The slush, the intersecting running streams on the marginal ice in summer time make travel difficult. Wind, bitter cold, snow, slush, and running streams can all somehow be overcome by man. There is no limit to our powers; nor to their expenditure—but common sense. I doubt that the inland ice of Greenland will ever be developed as a landing field for planes.

And, dear Stef, meticulous, factual minded devotee of truth, now that I've presumed to doubt, permit me to ask where you got that monosyllable *a* as the fifth word, fourth line, first paragraph, page one of *Greenland.* Am I to doubt my memory and my own most careful records and believe with you that I was in Greenland not two winters but merely one?

ROCKWELL KENT.

The Soviets at War

ALL NIGHT LONG, *by Erskine Caldwell. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $2.*

ERSKINE CALDWELL'S *All Night Long,* subtitled "A Novel of Guerrilla Warfare in Russia," reads like the synopsis for one of those stark Soviet films that no moviegoer can forget. In this story two men are pitted in conflict. The Nazi invader, the dehumanized ersatz soldier, is thrust against the Russian guerrilla, against the man who fights for life, land, and liberty. On the one side there is the German rapist, who declares with frightened awe: "Even the children that

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are no taller than your thumb have that same kind of strange look in their faces." On the other side there is Sergei, one of these Russian children grown up, a former tractor driver, who in preparation for the German invasion has concealed "small compact sets with enclosed aerials that could be carried easily from one place to another." The guerrillas use these sets to receive instructions from the Moscow transmitters.

"Always remember why they must be killed," Sergei says. "We are not killing them because they are men, but because they are Hitlerites. All men are brothers, until some of them try to enslave the others." And the guerrillas kill the Hitlerites; the guerrilla raids led by Sergei on the Nazi-held towns of Budnya and Vyndomsk are full of action-stuff all the way through: stabbings, shootings, stranglings, captures, and escapes.

And yet this Caldwell novel, in my opinion, has some of the faults of Steinbeck's *The Moon Is Down*. Steinbeck's Norwegians and Caldwell's Russians both seem a little remote, a little strange. But the truth, as we all know, is that the Norwegians and Russians fighting fascism and the "New Order" are not remote, not strange; they are the passionate, good, and fearless men, the heroes of our time, any one of whom is more "American" than a host of star-spangled appeasers, labor-haters, and lynchers. Of course, Caldwell like Steinbeck is doing a writer-in-wartime novel; Caldwell is translating into fiction what he has himself seen and felt in Russia; he is communicating the thunder of history not yet receded into the text-books. His mistake (and this reviewer has never been out of the United States) is that Caldwell has seen Sergei and the other guerrillas as "The Russians," just as Steinbeck viewed the men of the fiords as "The Norwegians"—when the Norwegians were only Joads with different names.

In sections, Caldwell writes of the Russians as naturally as he has written of his Tobacco-Roaders; in short, he writes living fiction. Where Fyodor describes the rape of his little daughter, "she was only twelve years old last summer," Caldwell has given us a scene as powerful as anything he has ever written. And Caldwell's insights into the Russian will-to-resist have been proved a thousand times: "No one ever said the news was bad, disheartening, or discouraging. It was either good, or not good. It could never be bad, because that would mean all was hopeless and lost." Caldwell has not been afraid to write of the Nazis as they are; he hasn't pulled his punches as Steinbeck did; he hasn't gone fuzzy as Hemingway did in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. His very effort to get the truth down has antagonized some of his reviewers; his raw, cinematic horror has bothered the nice literary souls. But he has knocked out a writer-in-wartime novel that, whatever its shortcomings, is like a bayonet pointed at the enemies of both the Sergeis and the Tobacco-Roaders.

BENJAMIN APPEL.

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SIGHTS and SOUNDS

A FILM GOEBBELS WOULD LOVE

"Tennessee Johnson," says Joy Davidman, insults the memory of Lincoln and slanders the Negro people. The Lavals and Quislings of Reconstruction.

WHAT a NEW MASSES editorial has described as "the film on America's conscience" has finally been thrown in the public's face, over the protests of nearly every progressive group in the country. It is difficult, but necessary, to analyze the motives behind *Tennessee Johnson.* It cannot have been prompted by the mere shameless desire to make a lot of money which inspired a *Gone With the Wind;* for few movies are less calculated to make money than this soggy apology for the lamentable Andrew Johnson. It is dull and stodgy, its history is befuddled even when not outright false, its subject is obscure, its characters are uniformly unsympathetic, its romantic appeal is nil. Nor can MGM have been moved by a selfless devotion to the memory of the drunken and brutally bad-tempered reactionary that Andrew Johnson was in his presidential years.

From the incoherent film, however, two clear ideas do emerge; they are cleverly masked, but they are unmistakable efforts to influence this war through discussion of the Civil War. And they are the copperhead ideas that the Negro has no rights and that war aims should be the restoration of the status quo ante bellum of the defeated countries. Forgive the slaveholders and the rebels, says *Tennessee Johnson.* Appease them, give them back their privileges, put everything back where it was before they walked out on us. Let our old pal Jeff Davis go right on running things. Set up Laval in France, Quisling in Norway, and Hitler—why not? let us be forgiving—in charge of conquered Germany!

THIS is the logical extension of the doctrine of *Tennessee Johnson,* so far as it has any coherent doctrine at all. For the most part it is befogged by an attempt to turn Johnson into a popular hero and an effort to evade progressive protests by sneaking past the real issues of Reconstruction. The fact is that Johnson, before the Civil War, did play a progressive role for a time, and the early sections of *Tennessee Johnson,* while amusingly limp as film, do at least have the merit of historical veracity. Johnson was a poor white, a tailor's apprentice. He fought with considerable courage for the rights of the poor Southern farmer, opposing the property qualification for voting, and braving lynch mobs. When the southern Bourbons walked out of the Senate after secession, Johnson remained, and he was instrumental in holding Nashville for the Union during the early days of the Civil War. For these services, and also for the moral effect upon the South of placing a Southerner in the Vice-Presidency, he was elected on Lincoln's ticket.

But with Booth's bullet and the end of the war Johnson revealed himself as one of the Little Foxes. He and his group proposed to ally themselves with the slaveholders, maintain the slaveholders in power, aid the slaveholders in exploiting the Negro, and in so doing grow rich themselves. Many of the poorer whites had fought for the Confederacy, allured by the hope of reopening the African slave trade and making slaves so cheap that they could all rise to the infamy of a plantation. This group of would-be exploiters, whose representative Johnson was, after the Civil War became the allies of the former slaveholders.

The film obscures this historical truth under the lying pretense that Johnson was merely carrying out Lincoln's policy of "forgiveness"; throughout *Tennessee Johnson* its protagonist justifies himself under attack by whining appeals to Lincoln's memory—thus seeking to identify Johnson, in the public mind, with Lincoln himself. No greater insult to the memory of Lincoln could exist than such a misrepresentation of his intentions. Lincoln did wish to heal wounds; to readmit the South to full rights as soon as the South could be reorganized. He did not wish to persecute the rank and file of the southern armies. But he had no intention of betraying the entire aim of the War, betraying the Negro and the Union, betraying his own record; he had no intention of allowing slavery, thinly disguised as peonage, to continue in the South. That was Johnson's idea.

THE film, while pretending that Johnson followed Lincoln, unconsciously betrays its own dishonesty by admitting that Lincoln's Cabinet was constantly at odds with Johnson; so much so that a law was passed by the progressive Congress, which knew Johnson through and through, forbidding him to dismiss any of Lincoln's Cabinet. The violation of this law by the dismissal of Stanton, Lincoln's great War Secretary, was the specific cause of Johnson's impeachment.

The impeachment and the events leading up to it are completely misrepresented in the film. The first appearance of Thaddeus Stevens is the signal for lies to pour forth. Stevens, the towering leader of the anti-slavery Reconstruction fight, the inspiration of the Fourteenth Amendment—this incorruptible and clear-sighted statesman is displayed alternately as a cynical machine-politician and (a sop to the democratic protests) a sincere man, but "a dangerously fanatical radical." (Lionel Barrymore's grotesque overplaying is another insult.) And why? Because Stevens speaks for the rights of the Negro; in the film's only admission that the Civil War was fought over slavery, Stevens pleaded that the emancipated Negroes be given their share of the land; that the southern Bourbons be prevented from recapturing the South. Otherwise the North, and democracy, would have won the war but lost the peace.

EVENTS have sufficiently justified Stevens. *Tennessee Johnson,* however, chooses to ignore that justification; to slobber over the "repentant" slaveholders, and to consider the aim of the Civil War attained when the Bourbons who arrogantly walked out of the Senate arrogantly walk back into it. As for Johnson's personal character and the story of his impeachment, the film approaches bathos in its frenzied efforts to twist facts. Johnson drank like a fish, so conspicuously that the film cannot ignore it; so it forges a Lincoln letter as a testimonial to Johnson's usual sobriety—his behavior at his own inauguration was just brandy on an empty stomach, taken through inexperience! The outrageousness of reducing Lincoln to a film-plotters' convenience in this way does not seem to have struck MGM, in spite of many pious tributes to Lincoln's memory. Johnson had, moreover, a peculiarly offensive sort of bad temper which led him to advocate lynching his congressional opponents—this in public speeches. This characteristic the film endeavors to twist into a mere boyish weakness. It does not succeed.

Johnson did not appear at his own impeachment; but the film, loath to sacrifice a mechanical climax, marches him in to make a pathetic last appeal to Lincoln's ghost. Amid much flubdub of would-be suspense, he is thereupon acquitted; Thad Stevens, who dared to defend Negroes, is properly punished for that crime; and the film's last sequence shows Johnson, years later, escorted to his seat as Senator from Tennessee to the

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Misrepresenting history has entailed slandering historical figures. Stevens himself, deliberately misquoted throughout, is handed to Lionel Barrymore to be played with a touch of Rasputin; Stanton, whose immortal "Now he belongs to the ages," is heard at Lincoln's death-bed, later in the film is presented as an unnamed "spy of Stevens" in Johnson's Cabinet. Charles Sumner, perhaps too much revered to slander, does not appear at all. The implicit slander of the Negro people is still more nauseating. A few of them appear as typical Hollywood servant-clowns; otherwise they are merely brushed out of the conversation with a conjurer's flick of the wrist. About the only public figure, except for the unspeakable Andrew himself, that MGM considers worthy of real admiration is Jefferson Davis.

THE film's evil intentions are unmistakable; its power to do harm, however, is fortunately somewhat hampered by the clumsiness of its execution. Like a copperhead with a broken back, it would spit its venom if it could. But its writing is stiff and lifeless; its acting negligible—Van Heflin, usually competent enough, plays Johnson with a sort of stammering distaste, and Ruth Hussey is nastily prissy as Mrs. Johnson. Its direction is more peculiar still. William Dieterle has made good films; but even in such a progressive piece of work as *Juarez* his style suffered from a mixture of pedantry and cheapness—forced melodrama, stagey tricks smelling of stale perfume, wooden and laborious progress from unimportant point to unimportant point. These faults are paramount in *Tennessee Johnson,* with no virtues to redeem them. The one love scene marches with the grace and lightness of a turtle, the "big climax" of Johnson's fake speech to the Senate cannot even keep your mind off your yawns. In a word, MGM will probably lose on *Tennessee Johnson* as much money as it deserves to.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

Memorial to Lenin

Twenty thousand people jammed Madison Square. . . . "Order of the Day."

AS A FAREWELL job for NEW MASSES, it is a privilege to be able to report on the stage presentation, *Order of the Day,* which followed Earl Browder's great, fighting speech at Madison Square Garden the other night at the Lenin Memorial Meeting.

Order of the Day was conceived and produced by Pearl Mullin Productions (Miss Mullin and her co-worker and husband, Mark Hess, have produced all the Garden spectacles for the Communist Party). The show was professional in the best sense of the word skilfully using a dizzy variety of technique and media blended into the general form of a variety show. Among the better known material there were moving presentations of Earl Robinson's lovely song, "The House I Live In," and his amusing "Look Out of the Window, Mama." Marc Blitzstein's satirical "Quiet Girl," deserves a nationwide hookup, which I have a feeling it will get.

STAR of the show was the fine Negro artist, Canada Lee, who is closely identified with *Native Son* that he has become a personification of the Richard Wright play and novel. He made a brief, stirring speech, and followed it with the final scene from *Native Son,* where Bigger Thomas says goodbye to his Communist attorney, Mr. Max. Mr. Lee's acting of this part is a landmark in modern stage history; in the gigantic halls of the Garden, standing before a microphone, without costume or props, he was still able to make the role live again. A scene from Konstantin Simonov's play *The Russian People* was a surprise feature that undoubtedly served to attract broad audiences to the Guild Theater, to witness this first Soviet play to be seen in America in many years.

But what I liked best about *Order of the Day* was the ingenuity shown by Miss Mullen, Mr. Hess (who wrote two excellent agit-prop sketches, "Dogfight" and "The Ukraine—1943"), James Wilson (the director) and Al Moss, musical director—in whipping together such disparate theatrical media as the dance number, the solo singer, dramatic and radio sketch material, transparencies thrown on a screen, monologue, and pageant. These competent young people are creating—purely by experimentation—new art forms that are demanded by the times and the setting. The whole job is a wonderful plug for the war effort, and Broadway could make good use of the understanding and enthusiasm of *Order of the Day.*

I have a feeling that Lenin himself would have liked it. I think that he would especially have liked the monologue called "Military Expert" (performed by an anonymous young man who is something of a genius as a comic); that he would have enjoyed Muni Diamond's "Otto of Hapsburg"—and most of all he would have liked the spirit of the thing. For he would have seen how people, nineteen years after the death of a great human being, can express their love of that human being in terms that move multitudes. He would have understood that the memorial was more than a memorial to Vladimir Ilyitch Lenin. In memorializing him, the twenty-odd thousand people who jammed the Garden were memorializing the spirit of man himself.

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L'unita' del popolo

ANNUAL DANCE POSTPONED

L'Unita's annual dance which was to be held on Jan. 16 has been postponed until Saturday, Feb. 6. Tickets for the Jan. 16th affair will be honored on the 6th of Feb.

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sister Dorothy, and Cole Porter have turned out. For a change the book makes some sense; at least it makes delicious nonsense. It concerns three oddly assorted cousins who inherit 4,000 acres of Texas and don't know what to do with it. But I won't tell the plot, which makes no difference to the enjoyment involved anyhow.

The three cousins are Ethel Merman, Allen Jenkins, and Paula Lawrence, and they're a lot of fun. Then there is Betty Garrett, whom I've been plugging for some time now (as have all the other reviewers). Miss Garrett still hasn't enough to do in this show, but she's on her way. She will be a luminary in her field, possessing youth, beauty and ability in large measure. Betty Bruce is a brilliant tap dancer, but more scope should have been provided for the accomplished spine of one Anita Alvarez, who can twist herself into the shape of a pretzel and make you like it.

William Lynn (famous for his greeting-card poet in *Three Men On A Horse*) is an inspired comic in this show, and there are several tunes you'll be whistling for months to come. Notable are: "I'm in Love With a Soldier Boy" (sung by Betty), "Something for the Boys," "He's a Right Guy" (sung by Miss Merman in her most appealing manner), "Could It Be You?", and a fine comic song that you have to be both Miss Merman and Miss Lawrence to sing—to wit, "By the Mississinewa." These two—Merman and Lawrence—make fine foils for each other's personalities, La Merman being on the brassy side, and Lawrence feigning an exceptional gentility.

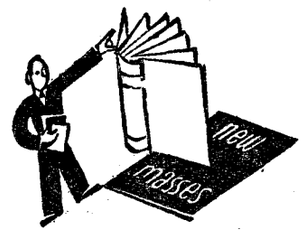
★

LEAVING NEW MASSES to work for the motion picture industry as a writer has not been the easiest thing in the world to do, for many reasons. For it was NEW MASSES that truly gave me the first chance I've ever had to write what I wanted to write in the way I wanted to write it. And having had the opportunity in its pages every summer (in the absence of Joy Davidman) of sounding off on the products of the film industry, I have sort of put myself on the spot by accepting a chance to show what I can do myself.

So I want to warn you in advance that if you see any exceptionally bad moving pictures in the future, it will be reasonably certain that I've had a hand in them; for the medium, although beloved to me, is entirely new, and there's many a slip between the yen and the product, as the flute blower can tell you if you ask him.

At any rate, please accept my thanks for the patience with which you have read what I have had to say these past three years, and remain assured that I have learned a great deal more from the brickbats I've occasionally received from zealous readers of NEW MASSES than they have learned from me. Yours for victory this year; a bigger (not better, since it couldn't be) NEW MASSES, and all my love to you all.

ALVAH BESSIE.



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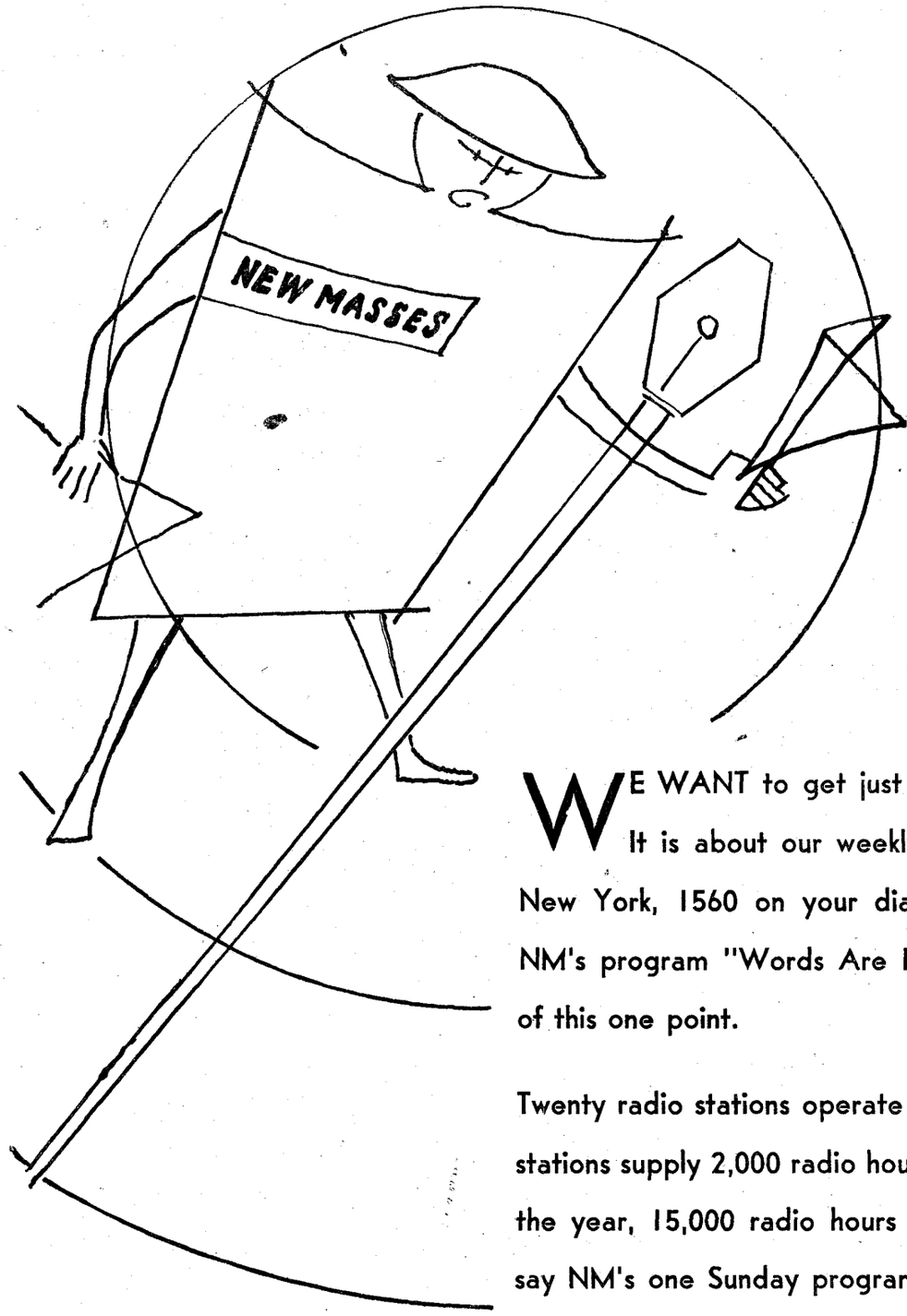

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